COMMEMORATOR

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King's Verdict Ignites Rage

In The Aftermath of King's Verdict, The International Campaign to Free Geronimo JiJaga Pratt Calls for a Worker Strike and a Day of Protest Rally — See Page13

At San Francisco State

Bobby's Back!

San Francisco — Bobby Seale, former Chairman, co-founder and chief organizer of the Black Panther Party, was the featured speaker and guest of the S.F. State Student Union on April 3rd. Speaking before an afternoon gathering of more than 200 students, Seale took the audience through a breif history of the Black Panther Party from its beginnings in Oakland. After talking about many of the programs initiated by the party in the past,he give some fresh ideas around economic projects for the Black and Chicano community through recycling old cars and houses.

"Breakfast, bullets and buttons," said Seale about the early days of the BPP. "With The Free Breakfast Program we were feeding 250,000 children all over the U.S. The bullets were about the shootouts we had against police violence. The buttons were about freeing political prisoners. In its initial stage, the BPP emphasized self-defense against police violence.

"The breakfast program caught on so well, the polls came out [indicating] that more and more people were supporting the Black Panther and the police shouldn't be attacking them," Seale said. "In mid-69 J. Edgar Hoover had a press conference and said the Breakfast for Children Program is part of the continuing threat to the internal security of America because the Black Panther Program is communist inspired!"

Seale said, "It [the breakfast program] was something people could touch! It was more then talk. It was more than rhetoric. He [FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover], wanted to stop it because we were uniting people who could understand where we were coming from because it was a real tangible thing."

Seale attempted to clarify the misconceptions about the Party and to shed light on many of the issues which propelled the Black Panther Party into the international arena for the cause of human rights.

"All power to ALL the people [meant] as we struggled we moved away from doctrinaire forms of Black nationalism, be-

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Cause Of Rebellion Rests In Economic Conditions

In the wake of the most violent civil unrest ever to hit the United States, Melvin Dickson, Chairperson of the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party, has put forth a call for increased organizing action and a massive membership expansion. The campaign will demand fundamental economic changes reaffirming and resurrecting the basic principles of the Black Panther Party as embodied in the Party's 10-Point Program and political theory as developed and promulgated by Dr. Huey P. Newton.

The nationwide expression of outrage and frustration began the night Rodney King was stopped by law enforcement officers from the Los Angeles Police Department, the L.A. County Sheriffs Department and the California State Highway Patrol for speeding. Following a "chase" at speeds "up to 50 miles per hour," Rodney King and his two passengers were hauled from their car and brutally beaten with police nightsticks and jackboots.

The unknown presence of a resident of the neighborhood with a video camera that captured the scene in all its ugly detail was shown thousands upon thousands of times on local, national and international television and appeared in virtually every newspaper and news magazine all over the world.

Beyond the video record, only the tape recorded transcript of radio communications between the police vehicle which included many racial epithets and slurs, the testimony of the police themselves and the testimony of King and one of his two passengers — the other having died in an automobile accident under somewhat mysterious circumstances still in need of thorough investigation, exactly what happened that night is largely unknown.

Police testified and the court accepted that the almost 100 blows (while 57 nightstick blows were counted in the video itself, that did not include the kicks and shoves and none of what occurred before the video began catching the action) that were used to "subdue" King were lawfully within the rightful performance of duty by the officers because King had raised his hands to protect his head and tried to crawl away instead of lying supine and unmoving after being knocked to the ground by the police blows. Virtually all poor blacks, Hispanos, other minorities and whites know by direct experience that the "brutality"visited upon King is not unusual, but instead is standard police practice in every major city and urban center in the country.

Acts of brutal violence were also applied to the two other passengers. But the one is dead and the other was denied his right to legal action by the Los Angeles

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Police and Martial Law

A few weeks ago the Berkeley Police department opened a new police sub-station at Fairview and Martin Luther King Way. This move was a response to the south Berkeley community, which has voiced concern about the recent wave of crime that has plagued their neighborhood. When it came to the attention of the Commemorator staff that a local neighborhood coalition called the Tyler California King Neighborhood Association (which, ironically, has now changed its name to the Malcom X Neighborhood Association) was unhappy with the development, we decided to investigate. What at first appeared to be a case of public outcry against the further police control in the South Berkeley community, an ethnically diverse, predominantly low-income area, turned out instead to be a case of property owners wanting increased police presence in their neighborhood, a more

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COMMEMORATOR

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"SERVING ALL OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES"
Volume 2 Number 1 May/June, 1992 Oakland California

Editorial

Capitalism, Government and Poverty

As we continue down the path of economic decline and social decay, it is becoming readily apparent to growing numbers of our poor and working communities that capitalism is simply not working. The government cannot be relied upon to provide the basic necessities much less the spiritual nourishment needed to survive and grow strong as a people.

As election year '92 unfolds, we are again given the choice of two millionaires, with almost identical ideology, dedicated to the preservation of Amerika's imperialist war economy.

Even the mildly perturbed voice of liberal America is silenced by a blitzkrieg of propaganda and an electoral college which continues to favor slick, neo-conservative, middle of the road Democrats like Bill Clinton over so-called visionaries like Jerry Brown.

Given the failure of electoral politics to bring peace, justice and prosperity to the working and poor communities, the voice of protest has been forced to seek numerous alternative strategies to promote social change. Most of them, unfortunately, have failed so far, and we are now at a critical stage for the survival of Black and other oppressed communities as well as the planet itself. It is thus necessary to examine carefully what strategies might work in this phase of the struggle.

Though all forms of protest have some proper context, we feel that there is a particular need for grass roots organization and movement in order to win the fight.

To better understand why, we must first get a clear grasp of the Big picture. The U.S. government's primary concern is to

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Whom the Gods Would Destroy

By Steve McCutchen

As resources, programs and services to the urban inner cities have been cut back dramatically during the last decade due to "lack of funds," there has been a progressively destructive trend in Black communities across America. Here in Oakland, the results of those "unavailable" and vanishing monies have produced the logical effects of such economic and social manipulations: wanton violence and death, instigated by the failure of those in power to identify and address the chronic problems and human needs of segments of its Black population.

Seven murders in one day; three killings two weeks prior to that; all of the victims Black and within the confines of what are predominately Black communities.

The immediate culprits are drugs, guns and the usual secondary causes of violence that the media and nearsighted officials and an hysterical population are compelled to see.

The mayor and city council must react; citizens are outraged and fearful; and in the flurry of this crisis Oakland is again labeled as a city out of control, a city and community "under siege" by drug dealers and gangs.

Citizens voice their rightful determination to live without the threats of violence in their neighborhoods and rush to their city leaders to combat the irrational tide of violence and mayhem that seems to have swept this city almost overnight.

A flashpoint has been reached again as mass meetings and outpourings of citizens vent their emotions and pledge their enraged commitment to "take back their neighborhoods, block by block." During the course of these renewed dedications and "emergency" actions, two things must be considered. The acts of violence and "revenge"are results of long term conditioning by the largest society and two, the denial of legitimate access to material and personal rewards in mainstream society has led to a "killing field" which will continue with minimal interruption if expedient measures are the final solution.

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LETTERS TO THE COMMEMORATOR

February 29, 1992

To whom this may concern: I am 20 years of age, in prison, and I've been convicted of a crime that I have not done. The witnesses came to court, and said she made it up, so that the police would not give her the case and so she would not do anymore time, she said she was a drug addict and she did not have anything to do with what has taken place on the day. I am not a killer, and I am not a violent person, I am in Pelican Bay State prison. This is my first time ever being embarrassed, and to see that no one dares to help me get back to my family. This prison I'm in has nothing but white C.D.'s that do not put any effort in to helping me. I want to be home with my family no one is trying to help. My trial attorney, Daniel Horowitz, did not go by what he told by mom, she borrowed $30,000 to get this guy to be my attorney. I turned myself in because the police were constantly messing with my grandmother and uncles hassling, them asking where I was. I didn't know anything about it at the time because I spent mostly all my time with my girl friend, she was pregnant with my daughter at the time, but during the time I turned myself in I thought I did the right thing, but it seems that the court system does not care at all. The judge did not or my lawyer did not let me get on the stand. Now my mom is stuck owing $30,000 while the judge, D.A. and my trial attorney are happy laying up feeling good while me and my family have to suffer, because of some body else's killing. I haven't done anything to be this far away from my family. My mom nor my grandmother cannot come see me! Is this what society calls justice? I don't know what to call society. My family is hurt and I'm hurt behind this. No one seems to help us when it is called for.

If you can help me, please do, if you can't could you please advise me to someone that can. My mom, Betty McCullough, gave me you guys address and said that you guys could help. This prison does not want to help, the only thing they're willing to do is shoot and kill people for nonsense reasons.

I need help badly

March 6, 1992

Gentlemen:

I have just recently been fortunate enough to read a copy of the January/February 1992, Commemorator, and am pleased with what I have read. Unfortunately, I am currently confined at the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks, the "Military's most well kept secret. "Anyway, considering my new thought pattern and lack of financial support for services rendered, I am requesting for the possibility of receiving the paper that I can't financially afford. You may have previously received a letter just like this one, but if at all possible, I would like to hear what the paper has to say on a consistent basis.

In advance, your cooperation and assistance is appreciated.

Do write back.

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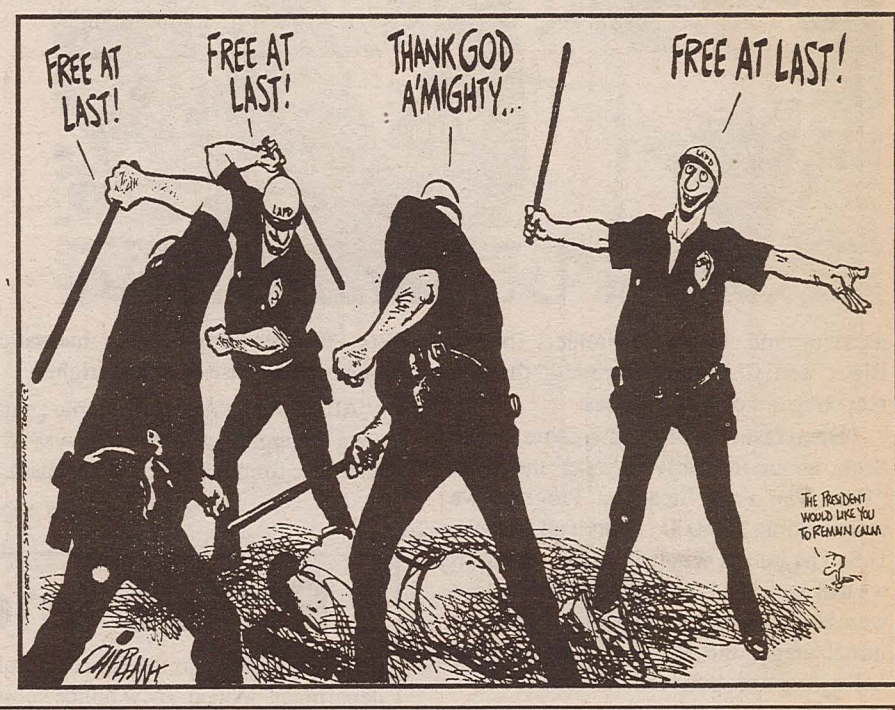

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Commentary

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC AGENDA PROJECT

Myths and Facts about Wilson's Fraudulent Welfare "Reform"

Pete Wilson's "Taxpayer Protection Act" will protect no one but Wilson and the wealthy. Governor Wilson is distorting the facts to pit racial and ethnic groups against one another and to divide middle-class, working people, and the poor.

MYTH: Welfare is bankrupting the state.

FACT: Welfare is not the cause of the budget deficit. AFDC accounts for only 6% of the state general fund. The 1991 AFDC cuts and loss of cost of living increase equal less than 2% of the current deficit. State sales and income tax revenue are dropping because the economy is in a depression.

MYTH: Welfare recipients don't want to work.

FACT: The unemployment rate in California is above 8%, and substantially higher for African-Americans. The official rate doesn't even count people who have given up and dropped out of the labor force. People who can only find part-time work are counted as fully employed. Single mothers can't find jobs which pay enough to support their children. When unemployment benefits run out, AFDC is the only choice. AFDC rolls are lower when unemployment is lower. Before Reagan, a recipient who worked could keep more of what she earned, but under the current formula, an AFDC recipient who works full time at minimum wage may actually be worse off (depending on her child care costs). If a recipient works under the table to supplement her grant, she is subject to criminal prosecution. Nevertheless, more than half of AFDC recipients work at some point during their stay on welfare. The GAIN program requires AFDC recipients to take training or education.

MYTH: Welfare mothers have lots of children and stay on welfare for generations.

FACT: The average AFDC family size is a mother and two children. Fewer than 1 in 10 recipient families have more than 3 children. 60% of recipients are off AFDC in 2 to 3 years. The additional payment per child is about $115, hardly an incentive to have more kids. Only 20% of children from heavily welfare dependent families grow up to become heavily welfare dependent themselves.

MYTH: California's benefits are too high, causing people to migrate here.

FACT: A family of three receives $663 a month. In 10 of the state's metropolitan areas, that won't even cover the low-end market rent for a two bedroom apartment. Rents in California are the highest in the nation. Only 11% of California AFDC recipients live in subsidized housing. That is the lowest rate in the U.S., and partly explains why states which provide more public housing pay lower cash grants. Even with $136 of food stamps, a California family on AFDC lives 15% below the official poverty level. Governor Wilson proposes to cut this sub-poverty grant even further, down to $507 (plus food stamps) for a family of three. These cuts are certain to push more children into homelessness and to increase hunger. After last year's 4.4% AFDC cuts, a San Francisco homeless shelter coalition reported turning away three times the number of people in the last five months of 1991 that they turned away the entire preceding year.

85% of California AFDC children were born in this state (compared to 75% of the general population of California children). Welfare caseloads have been increasing in all states because of the economy, and 20 states had greater caseload increases than California. The non-partisan State Legislative Analyst has stated that data does not support a conclusion that families move to California because of its higher cash grant, and available data on the birthplace of children on AFDC is in agreement. As for undocumented foreign immigrants, they are not eligible for welfare. Those social services their U.S.-born children may receive are more than offset by taxes paid by undocumented households.

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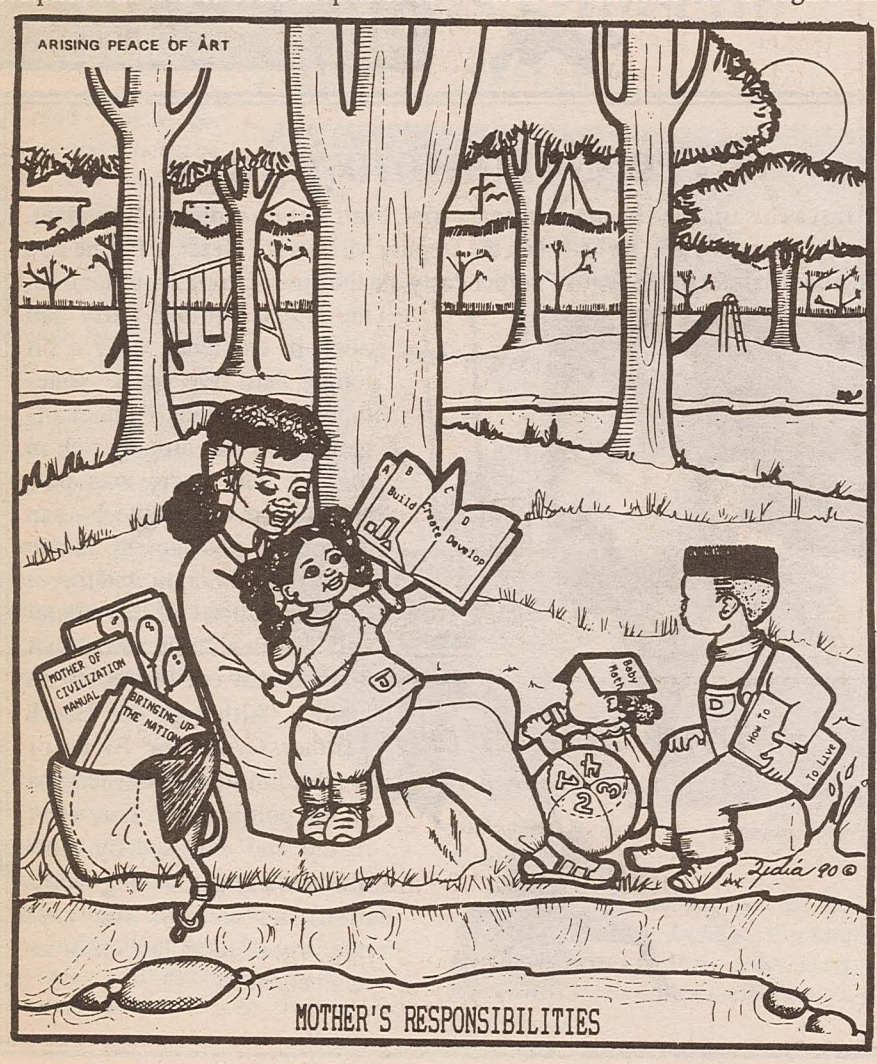

Cuban Health Care System Model For The Third World

Cuba's health care system is one of the proudest achievements of its Revolution. The World Health Organization (WHO) and other United Nations agencies point to the Cuban system, which makes health services ranging from primary care to the most complex procedure freely available to city dweller or rural resident alike, as a model for developing countries.

With more than 39,000 practicing physicians, Cuba's health statistics rival those of the most advanced countries. Infant mortality has declined from 38 deaths/1,000 live births in 1959 to less than 11 in 1991. Life expectancy is approaching that of the U.S. and still improving. Diphtheria, malaria, polio, whooping cough and other "silent killers" of Third World children have practically been eliminated.

Cuba has a highly developed pharmaceutical industry, producing vaccines against Hepatitis type B and a variety of therapeutic substances from medicinal plants. The country has developed heart disease and cancer therapies which are at the cutting edge of world achievement and conducts basic biological research, genetic engineering and specialized training in diagnostic technique.

The U.S. blockade has put severe strains on the Cuban health care system, hitting with particular vengeance at the special needs of children. In his Nov. 11 speech to the U.N. General Assembly, Cuban Ambassador Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada cited several items of medical equipment used in children's hospitals that were no longer available to his country.

He called particular attention to Washington's interference with Cuba's effort to acquire necessary medicines during an epidemic of hemorrhagic dengue in 1981, telling the Assembly, "In 1981 an epidemic of hemorrhagic dengue fever broke out in Cuba, in circumstances which give reason to suspect that it was introduced from abroad. The United States authorities interfered with our efforts to obtain the product (a common insecticide: Ed.) needed... not withstanding representations to Washington by the WHO... We were able to obtain that product only after considerable efforts and at great cost... More than 100 children paid with their lives for that episode of abominable cruelty."

Despite its own problems, Cuba continues to provide humanitarian aid to developing countries and ranks first among nations sending health care professionals to aid other countries. More than 15,000 Cuban medical practitioners are working in 11 Asian and Latin American countries and 26 countries in Africa. Children injured in the 1988 Armenian earthquake were given medical care in Cuban hospitals and 10,000 children who suffer from radiation poisoning because of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster have been airlifted to Cuba for bone marrow transplants and treatment of various cancers.

Reprint from World International Dept.

Bobby Seale. . .

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cause it's a class analysis [the white power structure against the people].

"You can't just talk about Africa and African people's oppression. You have to talk about all other people of color and some white folks. Talk about the earth's 5.4 billion people. You have to see the whole picture, analyze things on the whole earth, which encompasses everybody. This is what the human liberation struggle is about."

There's nothing wrong with a Eurocentric view as long as that view is not exploitative, is not racist.

He called upon the students to remain vigilant and aware of the forces that control the institutions of society and to involve themselves in any "form of struggle" that will deliver "peoples revolutionary humanism". He talked about how the Party built a community base and influenced other urban communities.

"We did a whole demographic thing throughout Oakland and Berkeley at that time. By 1968 the BPP had spread to 45 branches throughout the United States. We had volunteer doctors and other medics who would come in —the white radicals, Blacks, Chicanos and others volunteers. At one point we had a working coalition with brothers and sisters, but at another point, we had to resolve contradictions.

"In Sacramento, what the Reagan administration was doing, they had one black group fighting some Chicano brothers and sisters over some damn poverty funds, and I had to come in. I said we gonna stop this shit.

"I bawled them out for letting themselves be reduced to fighting each other over some damn poverty crumbs while the white power structure was laughing at you...But we resolved this and I told the brothers y'all can't do this; there's too many of us dying out there."

The former BPP Chairman continues to explain: "People don't understand this: There's nothing wrong with any ethic centricity as long as that centricity is not myopic or doctrinaire or sectarian. That's the problem. There's nothing wrong with a Eurocentric view as long as that view is not exploitative, is not racist. So you do not put it aside, you include the Chicano centric view, you include the Afrocentric view.

You can't just talk about Africa and African people's oppression. You have to talk about all other people of color and some white folks

You include the various ethnic centric views of all the races.

"Working coalition politics, as opposed to talk gets rid of the nationalism. When I talk about all 5.4 billion human beings on earth, I'm talking about learning FROM each other as opposed to just learning ABOUT each other. Learning ABOUT each other is one thing, but when you can start having the face to face coalition and human relationships you begin to learning FROM each other.

"As we go through the process of trying to institutionalize multiculturalism, down the road, we'll get to a point where we'll have humanistic transculturalism. See a hundred years from now we've got to have transculturalism on the face of this earth.

New Ideas Toward Solutions

"What I'd like to do, if I can snag 2 and 1/2 million. The Intercommunal Synergic Project automatically gets $500,000. Two specific job programs for youth would be to renovate old houses with professional supervision. The other one is renovating old cars with techonolgy of converting them to electrical vehiciles. they've got the techology now for charging them. Soi they can go 250 miles. And we will market them to middle and upper middle income people as a second car. it would make jobs for the youth in the Black, Chicano communities. We are killing two-three birds with one stone. We save environment, create jobs, and unity, educating the community. You can yet these old cars for $25.

"Money need redirected from the 300 billion military budget, half need to be for homeless women with children, back to the community and a sizable, significant portion for service programs, $20 billions a year for the next ten year.

"When I resigned in 1974 from the Party, we had dwindled down to less than two hundred and, being an old dialectical materialist, an old pragmatic, dialectical, analytical person, I say nothing ever stays the same, everything alway changes, evolves to another level. A wise person knows when to move on to other things."

In May, Seale will return to the Bay Area to speak and said he plans to continue speaking throughout the area as he works on his selected writings and speeches about the Black Panther Party struggles of people here in the country and around the world.

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Free Geronimo jiJaga

Just as his trial had been no ordinary trial, Pratt was no ordinary defendant. Until january of 1971, he had been the Deputy Minister of Defense for the Los Angeles Chapter of the Black Panther Party. At the time of Pratt's murder trial, the Black Panther Party had been in existence only a bit longer than five years. Nonetheless, the Black Panther organization was already rich in legend. The Party was perceived by many people, both in and out of government, as one of the most dramatic and forceful illustrations of the social and political upheavals that marked that era of American history. Although the Black Panthers were the focus of much admiration from persons on the political left, they were feared and despised by most officials of the federal government, as well as the vast majority of local law enforcement agencies.

Editorial

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protect the wealth of the few while the many suffer. This situation is global in nature, but the United States leads this process as the hegemonic power which protects its imperialist interest of monopoly capital.

Amerika, however, is in a state of economic decline which has been deepening for several decades. For twelve years the Reagan and Bush administration's "trickle-down" theory has placed an emphasis on the short-term profit motive and sold the American people a false image of prosperity, always promising that the labor classes will some day see the dividends of economic growth. But, in reality, this very administration has steadily rolled back social spending at every opportunity. They've cut student loans, busted unions and cut education while de-regulating and de-taxing big business. Suddenly we are in a recession with a trillion dollar debt due to years of reckless defense spending and short-term planning. What we are witnessing is the inevitable fall of capitalist economics as a viable construct for the continuation of humanity.

Under capitalism, as the value of labor declines, the value of human life declines.

Capitalism is an equation whereby the object is to maximize profits at the least capital output. In other words, to make the most junk possible for as little as they can pay the fewest people to make it. (Much of these synthetic goods are a waste and unnecessary, while most of the world's population are denied their basic necessities). We've now reached the point where technology enables us to make far more than we could ever need or afford to buy; and it takes fewer people to make it. The result? Lots of unemployment, lots of debt, lots of competition, lots of poverty. We have long passed the point of being able to provide anywhere near full employment. And as society becomes more automated , less and less people are needed to run the machine, making competition for those positions fierce.

The capitalist equation relies on a steady pool of cheap labor. Today we have more than enough people to make up the work force. What, then, of the excess labor force? Under capitalism, as the value of labor declines, the value of human life declines, beause as long as labor is a surplus comodity, the law of supply and demand makes it cheap.

Multinational corporations merge as companies run away to Mexico and to other poor communities around the world, leaving fewer jobs for the US population.

All of this happens at the expense of the poor — children, welfare mothers, urban students and workers. With Blacks the picture is worse. More than half the Black children live in poverty, while on a national scale, 1 out of 5 goes to bed hungry each night. This is the scenario in which desperation, crime and gang violence grow.

On the one hand, there's the military industry complex, the Watergate, Contragate, the Michael Milkens, S&L Savings; on the other, the consequences and symptoms: members of the poor are imprisoned or killed off by a number of symptoms, all stemming from the economic conditions, i.e., a lack of the basics, full and decent employment and the proliferation of the drug market, which has become for many in the urban community, especially the black and poor community, the only option to stay above subsistence level. While the wealthy class grows richer off the international drug trade, impoverished youth go to jail or die.

According to US government statistics, unemployment is at 8.5%, which does not include people who are homeless, immigrants and other so-called marginals. After adjusting the figures some sources speculate that we can triple that figure and in reality we have about 25 percent. In the African American community, government sources say 13.2 percent but if we triple that figure, it may well be that about 40.5 percent, almost half the population is unemployed. In poor countries around the globe, places such as Africa, Asia and Latin America, the figures are worse. In Haiti, for instance, thousands of refugees are either exiled or killed because they are in excess of the labor force. The vast majority are working for U.S. companies at $2.00 a day with no benefits and no health care. This system is enforced by the Ton-ton Macoutes, a C.I.A trained death squad, notorious for ruthlessly killing any and all opposition to Haiti's fascist military.

People who have no money for decent attorneys and have no one to advance their interests are treated like dirt by racist cops, judges and bureaucrats, many of whom are criminals themselves.

In this country, the government's solution to poverty is to provide food and shelter through its prison system and less through its welfare system. Prison slave-labor is on the rise. Privatization of prisons has already begun to contract with the American Securities, Inc., to build a corporate prison complex in Leavenworth, Texas in 1990. San Quentin has initiated a similar program. The United States has more people incarcerated than any other country in the world. In the African American community, we have four times as many incarcerated as in South Africa. Not only does this country criminalize poverty but its "legal" institutions systematically persecute people, especially from the lower classes, entrapping them in a maze of bureaucracy. In America it's a crime to be poor.

The strata of people who have no money for decent attorneys and have no one to advance their interests are often treated like dirt by racist cops, judges and bureaucrats, many of whom are criminals themselves.

As the recession deepens in California, governor Wilson's priorities are quite clear. His agenda for confronting the crisis has been to cut education, cut back GA (general assistance) while allocating more funds for law enforcement and expansion of the prison system. At a time when incidents of police brutality such as that of Rodney King, are at an all time high, it should be empirically obvious that more law enforcement is doing nothing to stop crime. Oakland's murder rate is double what it was at this time last year. All of this talk about being "tough on crime" is obviously not working. In reality, the more money allocated to law enforcement, the more crime goes up. Governor Wilson has budgeted an extra 7 million dollars to our police force for 1992, and already, we have seen the biggest wave of chaos and social disorder in this state in many years. The method of violence and intimidation will not stop the incidence of sociopathic tendencies, it will only add to it. Clearly the main cause of crime is poverty. If the government really wanted to end crime, it would end poverty. Yet as we face these troubled times, Mayor Elihu Harris' answer to his people is martial law.

We are told by the government to take the welfare system as a magnanimous gesture which is already beyond what they really owe us. The fact is, though, that the welfare system was never designed to be anything but a dole. If the government had any real intention to end poverty, it would take massive redistribution and re-allocation of resources towards programs designed at making fundamental changes in the economy, infrastructure and demographics of urban America. It would take a welfare system designed to create self-sufficiency and community empowerment rather that hand-outs meant to keep people dependent. Anyone living at subsistence level has little or no time to work towards long-term prosperity and personal growth.

The reason, however, that such an effort is not being made is because there is a basic set of assumptions that the government operates upon — a framework that it does not allow discussion of through the mainstream media. As many of us understand that this nation was built on the backs of slavery and genocide, this is a reality that mainstream America refuses to acknowledge. This government feels no obligation to you or your well-being.

Self-interest and competition are the prevailing social constructs of our time. As long as the government and the ruling class, operates under the equation of maximum profit margin, there is a logical course of actions which they will tend to follow according to the laws of the evolutionary process. In this framework, it would be counter-productive to let the masses become too educated and comfortable because they would no longer tolerate being controlled and exploited.

The trillion dollar defense budget is indicative of the government's priorites. Wars are politically and economically profitable for members of the international bourgeosie, like owners of the oil industry and military industry establishment. Wars are not started to profit the poor and working people as a class. That is what the recent war in the Middle East was all about. This is a time when the government should have been taking care of domestic problems (which would be the best thing we could do

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IN UNITY, THERE IS STRENGTH

We recognize that the fundamental problem of low-income workers, in Oakland and the Bay Area, as in communities world-wide, is the lack of income.

We make a pledge to strive to change this condition as soon as possible.

We must first, however, become united, an actual power that can make it possible for us to help ourselves—to fight for our own interests on our own behalf.

Our 10-Point Benefit Program, free of charge to association members, enables us to survive, while we organize and build that strength.

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ARCHIVES

Tackwood, Police Informant – Agent Provocateur

As part of The COMMEMORATOR objective to shed some light on the legacy of the BPP and the FBI'S conspiracy and attack against the Party efforts to change the conditions of the oppressed community, we reprint the full text of Tackwood's interview.

Q: When did you become active in any way working with the law enforcement agencies to disrupt and destroy the Black Panther Party?

Tackwood: That must have been around 1968. I'm not quite sure of the date.

Q: Who were you working for at the time and what kind of activities were you involved in?

Tackwood: I was working for SII, that's Special Identification and Investigation. SII works out of the Los Angeles Police Department office. At the time CCS (the LAPD's Criminal Conspiracy Section) was still working on the Robert Kennedy killing. So all the direct activities against the Panthers were handled by SII.

Q: What were your activities with SII at the time? What was your assignment?

Tackwood: Well, my assignment began when we thought we had put the Muslims to rest as a militant organization. Right around this time I think the Panthers were just starting to grow in Los Angeles and were coming in conflict with the US organization. The US organization had already been infiltrated and was being helped in every way possible by the LAPD.It was a "snitch" organization at the top. When I say "snitch" organization, I mean that a lot of youngsters that were coming into the US organization were being snitched off. I think Karenga (Ron Karenga, the head of the US organization) had various meetings with (former Los Angeles Mayor) Yorty and (former Los Angeles chief of police) Parker. He (Karenga) was a "good guy!"

Q: In other words, Karenga was informing on the people in his own organization?

Tackwood: Yeah, right. Like who's got guns here and who's arm robbing there. But he was supposed to be "good" for the community. So it was very easy to get him to take his organization and start a war against the Panthers. They needed somebody familiar with all the elements in the community, and the US organization had a lot of ex-Muslims and ex-teenage gang members. I knew most of them.

During this period the police were shooting Panthers left and right, in cars or wherever they could catch them. They were shooting them down as fast as they could find them, and the verdict would always be "justifiable homicide." The US organizations was ambushing Panthers too, in this and that place. So it was a nice war.

Into this came a few good Panther leaders like Bunchy Carter, cats who would go to college and speak there instead of only just dealing with the ghetto and the ghetto-type people whom, you know, the police weren't scared of because most had records or they could get them anyway. Bunchy was getting the colleges together, like organizing BSA's (Black Student Alliances) on different college campuses and actually starting to build a nucleus. Now that was a total danger to the LAPD — or whoever was giving them their orders — so the order went out to kill...

Q: Did you know specifically that Bunchy Carter and John Huggins would be killed by the US organization on January 17, 1969?

Tackwood: I didn't know the date. You see, there were so many Panthers getting shot down and killed that there was no way of keeping up on who was getting killed when.

Q: So you worked as a liaison between LAPD and the U.S. organization? How long did it last?

Tackwood: Oh that didn't last long. I had gotten into little hassles here and there, you know, and I had to leave, come back, leave and come back. So by the time I got back, the U.S. organization had almost ceased to exist as a functional organization. I soon heard an order come down from the police to break them up. See what I'm saying? In other words, "Karenga, you're no longer needed so let's get rid of you." and they did.

Q: Where did your activities against the Black Panther Party go from there?

Tackwood: Well, this around 1969. It ceased for awhile and then reactivated around 1970.

Q:During that period of time, 1969-1970, you weren't involved directly in activities against the Black Panther Party?

Tackwood: Well, indirectly and directly. It was a thing where it wasn't a direct involvement. It was like a shadowing involvement. In other words, it was on the fringes.

Q: Could you describe it?

Tackwood: During this period of time, I had gone back to jail for a little while and then I came back out and started passing myself off as an arms expert, a gun runner or whatever you want to call it. Like if you knew Tackwood, you could get any kind of guns in the world. If you had the money he'd get you one. This was the cover I was building. This is how I got back into it.

Then one day I was called up by Brown (Sgt. Larry Brown from SII) and Brown said, "Hey, Watkins wants to see you." I said, "Where?" "Well, he's up at the academy now, he's not up at SII anymore."

So I went to the academy and he said "Hey man, Intelligence (section of the LAPD)

Letter From George Jackson

It is not defeatist to say that we have lost a battle. How else can we regroup and even think of carrying on the fight? At the center of the revolution is realism. To call one or two setbacks defeat is to overlook the ebbing and flowing process of revolution, coming closer to our calculations and then receding, but never standing still. If a thing isn't building , it must be decaying. As one force emerges, the opposite force must yield; as one advances, the other must retreat. There is a very significant difference between retreat and defeat. I am not saying that our parents were defeated when I contend that fascist-corporativism emerged and advanced in the U.S. At the same time it was making its advance, it caused, by its very nature, an advance in world-wide socialist consciousness:

If a thing isn't building , it must be decaying. As one force emerges, the opposite force must yield.

"When U.S. capitalism reached the stage of European imperialism, the Western great powers had already divided among themselves almost all the most important markets in the world. At the end of World War II when the other imperialist powers had been weakened, the U.S. became the most powerful and richest imperialist power. Meanwhile, the world situation was no longer the same: the balance of forces between imperialism and the socialist camps had fundamentally changed; Imperialism no longer ruled over the world, nor did it play a decisive role in the development of the world situation" (Vo Nguyen Giap)

In my analysis, I am simply taking into account the fact that the forces of reaction and counterrevolution were allowed to localize themselves and radiate their energy here in the U.S. The process has created the economic, political and cultural vortex of capitalism's last re-form. My views correspond with those of all Third World revolutionaries. And if taken in the international sense, they are aggressive and realistic.

The second notion that stands in the way of our understanding of fascist-corporativism is a semantic problem. When I am being interviewed by a member of the old guard and point to the concrete and steel, the tiny electronic listening device concealed in the vent, the phalanx of goons peeping in at us, his barely functional plastic tape recorder that cost him a week's labor, and point out that these are all manifestations of fascism, he will invariably attempt to refute me by defining fascism simply as an economic geo-political affair when only one political party is allowed to exist above ground and no opposition political activity is allowed. But examine that definition of totalitarianism, comrade. No opposition parties are found in China, Cuba, North Korea or North Vietnam. Such a narrow definition condemns the model revolutionary societies to totalitarianism. Despite the presence of political parties, there is only one legal politics in the U.S. - the politics of corporativism. The hierarchy commands all state power. There are thousands of ways, however, to attack and place that power in the hands of the people.

Tackwood

Continued from last page

needs some people. They already got some people but they need more people with your knowledge and your ability to infiltrate the Panthers." He said "Why I nominate you is because you can report back to Brown what intelligence knows because Intelligence won't give us any more information."

Q: Just going back to late '68, early '69, around the second time, were you working with any informants within the Black Panther Party?

Tackwood: Early '69, no. You can say around February maybe I became aware of the Panther Party becoming infiltrated at a higher level.

Q: Do you know who was involved in the infiltration?

Tackwood: Melvin "Cotton" Smith was the agent.

"We're going to kill every Panther leader we can find. The ones we don't kill, run underground."

Q: Were there any others?

Tackwood: There were, but it was nobody high-ranking.

Q: So you had finished working with US?

Tackwood: There's an interesting interim in that I went to work in New Orleans for the LAPD, dealing with a chieftain in organized crime. It was kind of tickling at the time because there was no big Panther activity in New Orleans, but "two Black Panthers" (this is what the police report described them to be, two "black militants") walked up on him one morning and shot him six times in the chest. The description that was given said " possible Panthers" and there were no Panther activists in New Orleans and why would they be shooting a gangland chieftain?

The man was connected to high crime and if high level people even thought it was Panthers, they had facilities (available) to them have wiped out the Panther Party as a whole. You know that if the Mafia had any idea that their high-ranking chieftain was knocked off by Black Panthers, you know what they could have done? They could have turned out soldier after soldier, hit man after hit man.

Another thing the LAPD was doing at that time- everytime they arrested somebody

To conquer or defeat any organization you must harass them, number one, defeat them financially, number two; and after all else fails, place defeat in their minds

with any type of Panther literature, even if it was a Panther paper, they would name them as Panthers. "We arrested four armed robbers robbing banks and found Panther literature." If we were to believe all the police reports, all the L.A. Times reports, there must have been 5,000 Panthers in Los Angeles at one time, committing crimes. this was the start of the propaganda to turn people — not White people — but the blacks, against their own kind.

Q: were you aware of an organized effort to do that?

Tackwood: Yeah, there was a nationally organized effort to do that. One of the three prerequisites was to harass. Number one, total harassment. To conquer or defeat any organization you must harass them, number one, defeat them financially, number two; and after all else fails, place defeat in their minds.

So, first of all there was constant harassment of the Panther Party, I mean the different branches. The second thing was to constantly arrest Panthers, creating situations where they have to be bailed out, and the third thing to kill the leaders off, to show, "Hey, man, if we can get the leaders, we can get the little man." The fear element. This was the constant and nationwide type for all the Black Panther Parties all over America. They were wiping them out one at a time. they were making more Panthers go underground. They were charging Panthers with everything under the sun.

Q: What was your first assignment at CCS (Criminal Conspiracy Section of the LAPD) directed against the Black Panther Party?

TACKWOOD: After we got to a point where we generally knew where they were coming from, then we decided — we didn't decide, someone else decided for us — the final solution is we can put them all in jail, which doesn't seem to work, or kill them all off, which seems to work easy. So, there was a long discussion, saying, "Hey, we kill the little people off and it doesn't do any good, so let's start killing some of the big ones off." Somewhere along the line there was like a national directive: "We're going to kill every Panther leader we can find. The ones we don't kill, run underground."

Q: This is mid to late 1969?

TACKWOOD: Yes.

Q: What was your assignment in all this?

TACKWOOD: At first it was general. See who you can kill here. If it was possible to kill anyone in Los Angeles, let's see how we can set them up and kill them. Then, it can down this kind of way. I wasn't even aware of it, matter of fact, but one day I was sitting at home; there was a knock at the door and three police officers came in. "Guess what?" they said. "We've got an outasight assignment for you. You're in big with the Panthers and don't know it." They told me that the girl I was with had a brother named "Jackaldog." It was an alias; his name was James Edward Carr, who, I'm going to tell you, was Huey Newton's bodyguard and considered a high-ranking Panther member. "Huey is supposed to get out (of prison) soon," they told me, "and we want you right on his ass. "This is how I got involved in the Conspiracy of Conspiracies. It was during this time that it was decided: "You (Tackwood) get in tight with the big ones (the leadership of the Black Panther Party) and then we'll have a better way to see how to kill them. So after that, four or five hour shootouts didn't work (referring to the December 8, 1969, predawn police attack on 4115 Central Avenue, Los Angeles, the headquarters of the Southern California BPP Chapter), and the people were under indictment in such a way where they (CCS) felt, "Well, we have them contained at the present time so we'll change our objective. What we'll do, we'll go and kill some Northern California Panthers, since the Party's up north." This is why I came up north.

Q: Were you assigned to watch anybody in particular when you came up north?

TACKWOOD: No, it wasn't a watch thing. I can explain it to you: it was to figure out the best possible way to catch as many as you can at one time and kill'em. My assignment was, well, a running conspiracy of the LAPD.

Q: So it wasn't to kill one person following one plan?

TACKWOOD: No, if one plan failed, or if one plan was junked because it was impractical, or because the Panthers themselves changed their movements, then a contingency plan was started up. Three days before the August 7 (1970) shootout (referring to Jonathan Jackson's bid for freedom at the Marin County Courthouse in San Rafael, California. Jonathan, George Jackson's 17-year-old brother, was killed when waiting police shot up the van used in the escape try before it pulled out of the parking area. Black prison inmates William Christmas and James McClain were also killed in the van, as was Marin County Superior Court Judge Arthur Haley), the Santa Cruz police told CII it was going to happen. CII said, "OK, we're on top of it." That was it. There was never anything done about it — the judge wasn't even warned.

Q: The Santa Cruz police knew about it and the LAPD knew?

TACKWOOD: And SII (Special Identification and Investigation division of the LAPD). They had taps on the phone. You wouldn't believe the bugs they had or where. They had other agents too. But after that particular plot failed, then a second contingency plan from that group came up. This included Melvin "Cotton" Smith (a police agent who infiltrated the Black Panther Party). Smith was right in on the hot action, in the training camp, but he didn't know who was supplying the money and the overall planning of it. He was a soldier; he wasn't involved in the intellectual group in the conspiracy. When I came north what I found out was that the people who were involved in the second plot using the Southern California part of the Panther Party weren't Panther at all, but pretended to be Panther sympathizer (Committee of 7). So in the period of infiltration,m I found out that there was a definite plot to kill Huey Newton.

Q: Going on at the same time?

TACKWOOD: Well, this was a plot by the same people who were going to break George Jackson out. They were just going to replace Huey with Jackson. Simple as that. I'm pretty sure that Jackson wasn't aware that they were trying to kill Huey. This was among a small group of people, and I happened to be at that meeting because they kind of halfway trusted me. As they were thinking of all the ways of killing Huey— "let's poison him, shoot him, what not"— I came up with, "Hey let's bomb him."

At first, everybody was for it. I'll tell you the exact place where they were going to kill him. You see, Santa Cruz has a retreat for the BSA (Black Student Alliance) in Metchin. So they were going to invite Huey there to speak. He was writing a book at that time, in fact with

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LIFE'S LIGHT IN ANGOLA—U.S.A.

By Mumia Abu Jamal

Angola—the very name evokes the mists; subtropical scenes of blue-black sun-carved bodies at hard work in lush fields of green life; of fiery Queen N' Zingha leading Black troops into battle against the Portuguese invaders of

South West Africa; and of slavery, millions sold into lifelong bond age, making the dreaded trek from Africa to the so-called New World, brought in shackles to Brazil, the West Indies, and the U.S. Southlands.

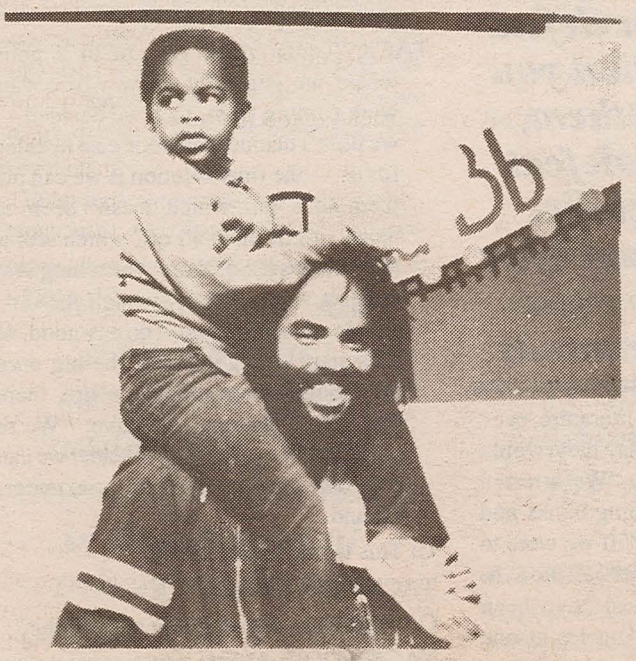
Angola—the nation's largest maximum security prison "camps" spread over 20,000 acres of lush, subtropical Louisiana earth, where over 5,000 mostly African-American prisoners work in fields and prison industries for a meager pittance—neo-slave labor.

Recently, the men of Angola put do wn their slave implements and stood tall in a remarkable display of human dignity, when Andrew Jones was rushed to death by rabid neo-Republican Gov. Chuck Roemer, who, despite calls for a brief stay until Louisiana's method of execution would be changed to lethal injection after Sept. 15th, barked, "This man deserves what he is about to get, " letting Jones' electrocution go on.

The day after Jones' legalized lynching, Angola's warden J. Whitley ordered men in the welding shop to construct a table upon which men could be legally poisoned.

They refused, among them, Eddie Sonnier, brother of "Pat" Elmo Sonnier, electrocuted on April 5, 1984 by Louisiana. All of the men in the welding shop were tossed into solitary, known as the "d ungeon." Word spread from camp to camp, across the vast New Age slave factory. Prisoners in the field, in solidarity, laid down their hoes, refusing to work. They were put in lockdown, and the National Guard were called in.

The prisoner-welders' principled refusal to participate in their own degradation forced t he administration to hire outside contractors to build the death gurney. They, and the field resisters are subject to severe administrative sanction including extended periods in the "dungeon," isolation ot punitive transfer.



Mumia Abu Jamal, a journalist, is on death row in Pennsylvania's Huntingdon prison.

The Angolite prison newsmagazine, edited by the award-winning prisoner/journalist W. LaDeau, will undoubtedly have coverage (altho' perhaps censored) of the demonstrations. The New Orleans-based Pilgrimage Peace and Justice Center (916 St. Andrew St., New Orleans, LA 70130) is urging folks to write the governor, or telegram/fax, demanding that no disciplinary action be taken against prisoners who won't participate in the death penalty—Chas. E. Roemer, Governor, State of Louisiana, P.O. Box 94004, Baton Rouge, LA 70804—Ditto: John P. Whitley, Warden, Angola Penitentiary, Angola, Louisiana 70712.

From the pits of these human hells, from the steaming fields where our very forefathers/mothers toiled in brutal sto len drudgery, come bright sparks of human dignity amidst the simple decent ref usal to serve the state in its dehumanizing deadly ritual.

They, rather than punished, should be widely, and warmly supported, for embracing life, rather than death.

Tackwood

Continued from last page

(J. Herman) Blake. They were going to invite him to speak, and while he was speaking, "Boom!" Everyone would say, "Oh, the police killed him."

Their knowledge [CCS] was so great, so far reaching—reaching all the way to when Huey Newton came to town, where he stayed, what he did

The problem came up that some of the leaders of their conspiracy would be there on the podium. So, "No, we can't blow him up." This was about September, 1970. He never knew. Huey never knew. He never knew that his friends, some of whom he trusted in at times, had righteously considered bombing him.

Q: You want to name names?

TACKWOOD: Yeah, Blake. Herman Blake was one of the main sticks in it. But Carr (James Carr, a former BPP member) got wind of it, and Carr blamed DeMonica and Don Nance. he went after them, not knowing that it was Blake all the time...

After various plans to kill George Jackson failed, it was decided, "If we can convince Jackson he's being broke out, he'll convince the rest of them." If Jackson thought he had an ally inside the penitentiary, then he could convince the ones who were going to break him out in the first place, who'd tried and tried again, to try it one more time. And that's how he got killed.

Q: You said that on August 22, 1971, you had a meeting at CCS and someone said, "CII fucked up." Were they working separately or together with CCS in plotting George's assassination?

TACKWOOD: That's what I'm trying to explain to everybody. Even within the Los Angeles Police Department, Intelligence, SII, they all stayed within one general frame of mind, but they worked independently of each other. They're all trying to pull this off. CII is the same way. Everybody wants to be king of the mountain and do the best job. So what happens is that each of them have their own informers, their own agents; each one of them has its own plans. It's like if we found out George is to be killed on the first by some other group, we'll work on killing him on the thirty-first.

Q: how many people did the police have working along these lines?

TACKWOOD: I know of only 17 officers in CCS. Their knowledge was so great, so far reaching—reaching all the way to when Huey Newton came to town, where he stayed, what he did—that they had to have at least 120 to 130 people working for them in and out of the Panther Party; on all levels, from the Friends of the Panther Party on up.

Q: Did you ever work with or for the federal government?

"Well, where are these FBI agents from?" These were the agents that were traveling with [President] Nixon. This shows you the power and scope of CCS.

TACKWOOD: Yeah. With Edward Birch. I'll tell you, it was a national type thing. It wasn't to get rid of some Black Panthers; it was to get rid of the Black Panther Party as a whole. And within the shortest period of time possible and the least expense.

Q: Did you take part in any of the FBI COINTELPRO program. i didn't know it was the COINTELPRO program at the time, but from the knowledge i have now and the years that have passed, I'm attuned to it.

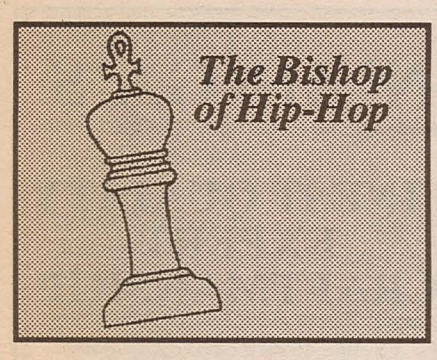
Q: Under what jurisdiction does CCS act?

TACKWOOD: I'll tell you a very interesting story and this will show you the scope of CCS. You remember when Nixon was in San Jose? There was a riot. Well, what I didn't know —and this has been verified — is that everybody thinks he was totally guarded by the Secret Service. But you see it's the FBI contingency that flies in before him and clears things up. So, the night of this riot, Bob Sharrett, Dan Mahoney and I came up to San Jose. We were picked up by the resident agent of the FBI in Santa Cruz and taken to a motel in Santa Cruz where there were many, many FBI agents. There were 12 or 13 of them. They were off in a room with flack jackets, high powered rifles, the best that was available at the time. And we all got in custom-long cars and went on a raid that wasn't successful — against the Panthers.

What was happening was that this was another plan against the Panthers. They were going to kill off all the people training up there, just kill them off. Huey Newton was supposed to be visiting there, along with some of the Party's top leadership.

But the amazing thing is that I found these FBI agents weren't familiar with the area. I asked, "Well, where are these FBI agents from?" These were the agents that were traveling with Nixon. This shows you the power and scope of CCS.

The scope of what I'm saying: phone conversations that must have been made, and to whom? to get Nixon's bodyguards to go along on a raid? That came right out of Washington. The implications of that are tremendous.



I don't know if you have been hearing about it, but a lot of strange things has been happening in the Bay Area lately. As you know, the relationship between the cops and the communities abroad have NOT been good EVER but especially in the last year. But around the Bay Area, a lot of these klansmen with badges, and a lot of nazi skinheads have been coming up missing. Some are gone for days, others MONTHS. And when they are found it's usually not a pretty sight. Inside sources say that the coroner's reports read of maulings by some sort of large cat. Panther-like claw markings on victim's chest and back would say that it's the mark of hip-hop, Paris. About to drop his second album "Sleeping With the Enemy," Paris, the man who brought you "Break the Grip of Shame" and helped you see "The Hate That Hate Made" to "Escape From Babylon" is back. This new album, which starts with a Panther Party raid on the White House is no joke. This is a milestone for the pro-Black radicals who not only love to hear the Panther roar, but want to make a true change in the way this system is being run. This is music for the REAL revolutionaries. So if you think you got a question, P-DOG'S got the answer. Step back, and make way for a Panther.

THE BISHOP: What's different about the new Paris album?

P-DOG: Being into conscious rap, you always run the risk of slipping into rhetoric, and I don't want to do that. This album is much more direct than the last one. The first single will probably be a song called "Think About It," which deals with the man-made origins of AIDS, and it's very direct to the point.

It quotes Dr. Ted Strecker, who has a report called The Strecker Memorandum. It basically breaks it all down. He says that in 1976, at Ft. Detrick, Maryland, AIDS was started in the p-4 lab, building 550, under house bill 15090, from the 91st session of Congress. It was made by splicing the Bovine virus in cattle with the Visna virus in sheep, to give Bovine visna. And it was requested as a T-cell destroying agent, as biological warfare for the U.S government. I go into that in depth.

I got another one that deals with political prisoners and another one that talks about Black women. Its called "Assata's Song." One of the mistakes I made on the last album was not including the struggle of our sisters. Which was not a conscious gesture, it wasn't something I planned, you know? It's like you live and you learn, you grow and learn more. And in doing so I learned the importance of what they went through.

THE BISHOP: What religion do you have now?

P-DOG: Islam, it's still Islam, but I'll refrain from comment.

THE BISHOP: So the album's called "Sleeping With the Enemy?"

P-DOG: Correct.

THE BISHOP: Obviously, uh, implications that —

P-DOG: No. Actually, it has nothing to do with jungle fever. It's about house niggas. When I say that you are sleeping with the enemy, that means that you are in allegiance with the agents of society that oppress us. In doing that I say that you're sleeping with the enemy. The title track is just about that. About the Colin Powells and Clarence Thomases of the world, and Black policemen. We're not even going to talk about the Rodney Kings and all that. We can look at the situation right here in Oakland. Tupac gets beat down for jay-walking, Alameda police are having racist (white supremacy) messages being sent AND you have police in Oakland that are raping Black women. Pigs ain't shit, fuck 'em.

THE BISHOP: What do you think that we as a Black people have to do to fix the deterioration of the Black male/female relationships?

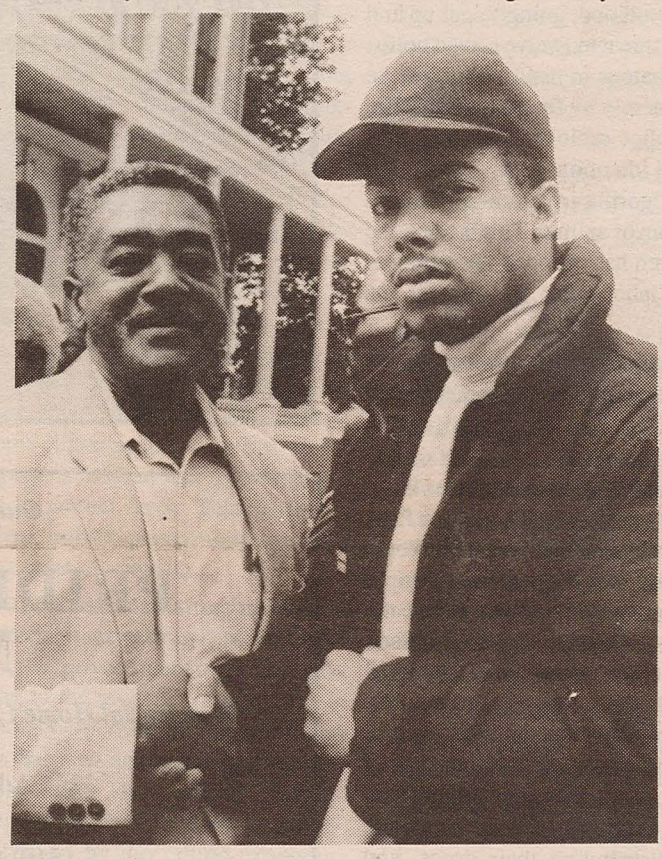
P-DOG: I had this fool come up to me at the B.M.I. event. He walks up to me and says "I hear you said that all niggas who beat up on bitches are punks."

I said "Well, YEAH."

And he said "Well I beat up on plenty of bitches in my day, are you calling ME a punk?"

I said "Well if the shoe fits, partner, wear it."

So he tried to walk up all on me, but it was squashed quickly, and without incident. But that just goes to show you the mindset that people are working on. Here I am, someone that's trying to do good for the community, tryin' to enlighten people, and you got fools like that. I seen a sister the other day with a shirt that said "Niggas ain't shit," and I was like, damn, our people got a lot of work. People are hard to approach. They don't want to hear shit nowadays. So for those that wanna listen I'll give it to you.



Bobby Seale with revolutionary rapper Paris.

THE BISHOP: On your last album, you seemed able to avoid all the so-called anti-Semitic/racist madness a lot of other politically aware hip-hoppers usually go through. How do you feel about Ice Cube's album?

P-DOG: I gotta stand by Ice Cube. I can't say that I wouldn't say the same thing. Pay respect to the Black first or your shit'll get burned down. Simple as that. You're in our community, don't disrespect us. Now I don't have anything against Asians or Jews, I don't have anything against anybody. But as soon as you start disrespecting me I gotta poach you. Also, you gotta keep in mind that this is a brotha who's been talkin' about killin' for years.

THE BISHOP: Right.

P-DOG: And now, when he starts to EFFECTIVELY point his anger and aggression at the places where it needs to be pointed at, NOW people are getting scared in their boots. They start cryin' racism. When he was talkin about the drive by and all that wasn't nobody saying shit.

THE BISHOP: What's up with these brothers today? What can they do to get a grip and uplift?

P-DOG: First, quit looking at every brother as your enemy. I would say to stop the fighting, the drugs and the turf wars. Stop fighting over the white man's land. And stop playing into the hands of people that WANT to see this happen to you. By taking that N.W.A. type mentality, you drive us deeper into the dirt. We're already the wretched of the planet. And we'll NEVER get anywhere if brothers keep shooting each other over bullshit, like lookin' at a muthafucka wrong, or talkin' to his woman. More interaction with centers like The Omega Boys Club, you know? More reading. More of operating on an intellectual level will move you away from the savagery of what the street move you to.

THE BISHOP: You called yourself a "BUSH KILLER" on the song that you did with KING TECH and M.C. Sway along with Digital Underground on the track called "It's Time for Peace" done when the war with Iraq broke out. I see now, you have a song called "BUSH KILLER." Now I'm sure you are aware of operations run by the government like COINTELPRO (the counterintelligence program to destroy BLACK organizations, founded 60's by J. Edgar Hoover)?

P-DOG:Right.

THE BISHOP: Well, like I pretty much know that MY phone was tapped in my dealings with the Black Panther Paper and the Commemorator. Don't you, like, I don't really know how to say —

P-DOG: No. FUCK NO! Man, that shit is a joke. Not that I take it lightly, but, George Bush and the entire system is a joke. Everything progressive he is against. Everything that is not Christian, white, upper to middle class, male, he is against. Now, you see election year is comin' up. The civil rights bill was ratified Friday. He openly denounced David Duke. Something you would have not seen had this not been election year. He just appointed Magic Johnson as the national spokesman for the AIDS campaign. Well, he never cared about AIDS before. There's far more money spent killing people than there is saving people.

So you take it as a GIVEN fact that these people, the CIA and the FBI are out to get you. You have to take it for GRANTED that it's tapped. But I never put myself in a position where I'm open to these things. I keep my taxes straight. At BEST what I could be labeled is seditious, at best. And that holds a penalty of death in this country, not too many people know that. But I think that the public outcry would be as such that I wouldn't get sweated.

THE BISHOP: Do you ever fear for your life man?

P-DOG: Yeah, wouldn't you? Especially with this new shit comin' out, hell yeah. But it's gotta be said. So fuck it, and fuck THEM. It's thirteen in the clip for muthafuckas comin' by the house, (chuckles) put it that way. Thirteen is my lucky number.

THE BISHOP: What's up with all the white kids that are down with your music. I can go down the street almost anywhere and see white kids singin' "The Devil Made Me Do It." How do you explain that?

P-DOG: They wanna hear the truth. And if they are down to hear it, I'm down to give it to them. But Blacks are my target audience. The message ain't gonna change. Not one bit. So, Im'a be here awhile. P-DOG will NEVA die.

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YOUR SCENTS

A Demand For Justice

On April 29, 1992, the four racist pigs who brutally beat Rodney King in front of millions of Amerikans, walked away scot free. Their acquittal should come as no surprise. This affair is symbolic of the abusive, genocidal, and barbaric mentality of a white, male power structure which, for five hundred years has paved the way for its suicidal war machine with the blood of colored and other opprerssed people.

They know that there is no way that this economy can sustain itself for all of the people, and they realize that the social unrest we are now seeing follows a natural cycle of events.

In the past, before the civil rights and protest movements, they did it openly with no apology. Today, things are done more efficiently. Bureaucratic procedure has sterilized the emotional impact of police violence and made the systematic persecution of people seem normal or legitimate. How many times did we see the tape of this spectacle of savagery and yet we are told to accept the verdict simply because it was so? This assumes that the legal system is fair in the first place. There is a difference between law and justice, which is being shoved in the face of all who have forgotten it.

The verdict was determined the day the trial was moved from Los Angeles to an affluent community inhabited by 2000 cops and the Ronald Reagan library. Members of this community have no clue whatsoever what it is like to live in the ghetto conditions created by their consumptive lifestyles and their corrupt government. This is further proof that the legal system only works for people with money.

This verdict also assumes that the society is egalitarian. The bottom line of police violence is economics. They know that there is no way that this economy can sustain itself for all of the people, and they realize that the social unrest we are now seeing follows a natural cycle of events. The message of the Rodney King verdict is that the police must be given the license to beat and brutalize into submission the victims of the white-male power structure's conspiracy of racial and class oppression. A precedent has thus been established, and the mechanisms of fascism can move forward to maintain the capitalist status quo. In fact as righteous as the reaction was, the subsequent chaos provided the perfect excuse for the government to call in the national guard and occupy Los Angeles and other poor and working communities throughout urban Amerika.

We are told by sleazy, unethical lawyers who really don't give a damn anyway, whose only interest is to get their client off by any means possible, that the film we see has "distorted" our view of what happened, in other words that 2 + 2 = 5. According to the defense attorney, these were officially sanctioned, departmentally approved blows. That is probably the truest thing he said in the entire trial. If this is so, the department needs to be eliminated. Even after Mr.King was lying on the ground, defenseless and beaten half to death, the violence continued in order "to prevent greater harm later" – the same excuse for the conflict with Iraq.

How is one unarmed man, lying in a pool of his own blood, going to get up and pose any kind threat to twelve armed police officers with batons in hand? Why was he not subdued merely by the handcuffs? The tape of the police radio broadcast reveals what their real intention, to have some fun beating on a "gorilla in the mist", something subhuman or animal. This is the same mentality which has propped up their system of slave labor since the days of the plantation.

Every attempt that has been made by colored and other oppressed peoples to pull themselves up has been violently, deliberately undermined. It doesn't matter what the methods are. Martin Luther king, shot... Malcolm X, shot... The Black Panther Party shot, jailed and harassed. Years of patient hard work by dedicated people have been spent to take our people out, the neglect and systematic abuse oppressed people have experienced in a continued effort to teach the white ruling class the meaning of the word "humanity." And to this day, an elite, corrupt, satanic cult of businessmen, politicians and bureaucrats are working overtime to keep us down, selling and distributing their drugs, and then putting our people in their prisons, resorting to every tactic to divide, weaken and disempower our community. This is not just an isolated miscarriage of justice but an organized and systematic plot of genocide.

This can only be stopped if the anger demonstrated on the streets is dedicated to building organization that lasts, that continues to fight every day, that calls upon sustained commitment and self-discipline not only to strike back but to win. The enemy is not just four police officers but those who paid them, trained them, pretended to conduct a fair trial so that 49% of the wealth in this so-called nation to remain safely in the hands of 1% of the population.

The Rodney King incident is significant because it marks the first time in many years that people of color have begun to develop a social and political consciousness. The days of killing each other must end. We must as a nation and world accept the reality that we are One , One people, One love, One planet and if we work together we can bring an end to this system of exploitation and white supremacy forever.

Look for me in the whirlwind or the storm, look for me all around you, for, with God's grace, I shall come and bring with me countless millions of black slaves who have died in America and the West Indies and the millions in Africa to aid you in the fight for Liberty, Freedom and Life.

Marcus Garvey, writing from Atlanta Prison, February 10, 1925

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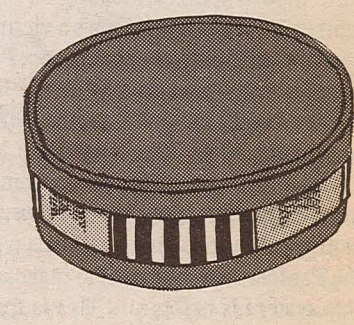

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Martial Law

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plausible scenario given the nature of class divisions in America.

David Parmelee, a representative of the group, spoke of the need for more police protection in the neighborhood, calling the station a "coffee house for meter maids". Parmele outlined a history of disputes between their association and the city of Berkeley, complaining of the high rate of taxes they pay and the little they get in return, particularly in comparison to the wealthier population in the hills. The Malcom X Neighborhood Association, named after the school in South Berkeley, began several years ago as a neighborhood crime watch and soon expanded to become a community interest group. Their first major initiative was to block the further "re-development" plans, a program which excises a 4% across the board tax to build multi-unit, low-income housing in empty lots in neighborhoods like this one. Apparently, most of this money ends up being siphoned out for other purposes, as evidenced by the paltry, pre-fabricated nature of these buildings. Furthermore, Parmelee contends that "re-development", in theory, should happen in neighborhoods which are already predominantly below the poverty line. It is true, also that such re-development does not happen in the hills, where the conservative, monied interests of the Berkeley community are sure to lobby against any more encroachment by what they consider to be "undesirables", people marginalized out of the middle class economy.

While the police's PR department is busy shaking hands with the property owners, a minority in this community, they are busy terrorizing the rest of the community.

Re-development along these lines is indeed no answer to poverty, and the density of the area has approached maximum. For these grounds , the Malcom X association won and prevented further development on the targetted lots. This leaves the question of where the many interests in this area stand now. Parmelee stated the chartered purpose of their association to be making the community "better" and crime is the major issue now facing them. How to address this issue, however, is debatable and chances are you will find different answers for every interest and every income bracket in the area.

While the police's PR department is busy shaking hands with the property owners, a minority in this community, they are busy terrorizing the rest of the community. This is a classic example of how capitalism divides people along class lines and pits different segments of the community against one another. It is certainly reasonable to expect that people who own property are going to support added police presence in their community. This is because they have an interest to protect. The vast majority of Americans own little to nothing and millions are homeless. These people have very little to protect, and many have no option but crime to stay above subsistence level. In communities where such people make up the majority of the population, it is evident that the police are not there to protect them. Their concern, rather than police protection, is often protection ***from*** the police.

In each tier of the class structure, we can see the level of services and security offered by the government directly corresponding to the level of income. This is why the homeowners of this neighborhood complain that they are recieving the short end of the stick. The working, middle-class, property owners, who are being adversely effected by the failing economy, are seeing that their interests are almost as insignificant to the ruling class as that of the lower class. In fact, if current economic trends continue, it is concievable that there soon may be no middle class to speak of at all. It would make sense, then, at this time for all people of poor and working communities to form solidarity. The power structure understands this, and cleverly uses fear and intimidation to keep these interests fighting amongst each other.

The increasing size and brutality of the police system has shown no ability to correct the underlying causes of crime and a serves only to fuel the fire. With a massive effort of propaganda and public relations, the government and its civilian army are attempting to win approval from unknowing elements of the middle class, whose economic interests have kept them from looking at the big picture, and what we are really seeing on the horizon is the rise of a police state.

The same thing that is happening in Berkeley is happening throughout the East Bay, the country and the world. In Oakland, Mayor Elihu Harris has produced a document outlining this agenda. It is the "public safety proposals/policies for 1992" but in actuality it is the blueprints for what even he has called martial law. It is a forty-two page document whose language appears on the surface, an innocuous safety program, but under the surface has serious implications to the astute observer of political economies.

Harris has enlisted the aid of figures such as Richard Held, F.B.I. official, who helped design the infamous COINTELPRO operation, which was responsible for infiltrating, killing, disrupting or discrediting orgainizations such as the Black Panther Party, the NAACP, the Peace and Freedom Party, AIM and many other movements aimed at bringing peace, justice and economic liberation to poor and working communities. Even Martin Luther King, Jr. was targeted by COINTELPRO as an enemy of the state.

Mayor Harris' program is in keeping with this mentality of neutralizing of the "enemy". No where in this document is there any mention of poverty or any other of the numerous social diseases of our society which give rise to crime. The main thrust is for more policing, foot patrols, curfews,and increased enlistment in the forces. Though there have been over 700 complaints of police brutality filed in Oakland since 1980, Harris contends that this is what the community has asked him for. Maybe this has something to do with who he has been associating with.

Much of the document calls for what he terms "community policing", trying to involve members of the community with the police effort. He has even proposed giving a station on the cable T.V. network to the police force to teach the community about the nature of what they call "crime" but what many call "survival." He proposes to film areas of Oakland where crime occurs, hoping to even catch arrests in the process, obstensibly to teach poeple about the nature of crime, in reality to teach people from the earliest ages up to glorify the police and enjoy their violence.

The rhetoric of "community policing" is to empower the community. Instead it serves to keep people dependant on the government and teaches them to mistrust their neighbor. Though most criminals are really victims in many ways, they are barely referred to as people. They are considered the enemy, a threat to be neutralized. And people who don't see this are being blinded from the fact that there civil rights are slipping away before there very eyes. Harris' drug enforcement policy, for instance, speaks of the need to shift emphasis from arresting dealers to "users", as a means of attacking the problem. This makes no sense. There is no explanation of how this will do anything but persecute and jail more lost , youg souls. Furthermore this opens the door to a number of violations of our constitutional rights. The Comprehensive Violent Crime Control Act of 1991 permits the use of evidence in court even if it was obtained in violation of or fourth amendment protection against unreasonable search and seizure as long as their was "good Faith " intention on the part of the officer that drugs were involved. This enables the cop on the beat to play supreme court justice, and make up the law as he goes along, searching and harassing whoever he/she feels necessary.

It is urgent that people at all levels of the class structure look beyond their immediate personal interest and recognize the implication of these trends. If we do not, it will soon be too late to avert the rise of the police state which threatens us all with the foreboding menace of fascism.

Berkeley Homeless Union Forming

Yukon Hannibal

I am not just speaking as one person but I am speaking for the hundreds of thousands of homeless people in America, especially the hundreds homeless in Berkeley.

is it a crime to be homeless? According to Berkeley city officials and their army, the berkeley Police Department, it is. Berkeley homeless are subject to harassment and abuse and in most cases arrests. The city claims that rampant drug selling and use gives them the cause to arrest, but in reality the fact that we exist gives them the cause to arrest. The fact that we are Black and poor or White and poor or Hispanic and poor or just plain progressive gives them the cause to arrest.

Because of who we are and what we are! — a people that is literally disgusted with the murderous war machine that exists in Washington D.C. and Berkeley, CA and other U.S. cities — we are automatically targeted and harassed, jailed and murdered. These phoney governments of people have no room for progression towards a strong people's community that could possibly eradicate all of the social ills that plague this nation.

Homelessness in America is seriously a social ill. The fact that we are homeless in one of the richest countries on the map speaks for itself. The fact that money is spent on war materials and the construction of high rises for the rich and very little is being spent on homeless services speaks for itself. The fact that our so call national government spent billions of dollars to bomb the hell out of Iraqi people and the University of California at Berkeley spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to build volleyball courts in People's Park and the City spent thousands for basketball in People's Park and very little is spent for homeless services speaks for itself. The fact that we have a city government who at one point in history boasted of their progression is so determined to wipe out the current progression in Berkeley speaks for itself. The fact that we have homeless people sleeping in doorways, sleeping in cars or where ever else we can find, and are subject to arrest if discovered speaks for itself. The fact that we have absolutely no right to even exist speaks for itself.

In essence we are living under the most cruel, degrading, and immoral government rival only to South Africa.

It is time now for oppressed people everywhere to rise and cast away the shackles of modern day repression. it is time to unite and resist the powers of U.C., the Berkeley City fascists, and all Bush cronies. It is time to take back the streets and the corporations and the military machine of America. it is time that we stand and say no more bullshit in Berkeley!

i would also like to take this space to announce the reactivation of the Berkeley Homeless Union. We hope to organize hundreds of homeless in Berkeley and present ourselves to mayor Loni Hancock and say this is your problem so deal with it.

Cause of rebellion

continued from page 1

prosecutors apparently because lacking direct video evidence, no crime could have been committed.

Many academicians, liberals and advocates of appropriate police behavior and professionality under community control looked to the trial to place some limits on the growing brutality that has been evident in police practice in the United States over the past 30 years.

Things will never be the same again in this country or the world as the United States now finds itself a country divided.

Defense testimony, falsified by the police officers according to King, was joined by his own attorneys agreement to move the trial from predominantly black low-to-middle income Los Angeles to predominantly white middle-to-upper income Ventura County. (Editors note: Some 2,000 of 8,500 total Los Angeles police live in Ventura County.)

The change in venue virtually guaranteed acquittal for the officers. Such a change even to the clear detriment of Mr. King was a normal part of the systemic collusion that occurs between public defenders, prosecutors, many private defense attorneys, and the courts, in which they see themselves acting on behalf of the system over the rights of individual citizens and even their clients. It was not likely intended that the acquittal would result in the largest, deadliest and most costly riots in the past 75 years.

Certainly it was not intended that the reaction would reach beyond the confines of Los Angeles and completely change the relations of the various strata of society across the entire North American continent.

The Los Angeles Police Department which is already overburdened from funding and budget shortfalls, the resignation of Police Chief Gates, charges of internal shakedowns, drug dealing, protection payments, and racialist practices within the department, has largely remained unchanged in policy and outlook since the Watt rebellion of 1966 when Chief Gates took the job and LA Mayor Bradley won elction from the police chief position he had previously help.

Gates has been "a cop's cop" and has protected the reactionary and racialist elements in the department consistently. Bradley was elected and remains in office with support up until now from both liberals and law-and-order type conservatives. Because he is black, because he is a cop himself, and because he favored the big economic development and financial interest instead of fighting for material changes in the economic order. He has help on to the position for over 15 years.

Dickson, a long time activist in the struggle for freedom and justice for poor and minority people, a long time member the Black Panther Party, and a founder and the publisher of the COMMEMORATOR, pointed out that the BPP itself was born in 1966 of the struggle halt police brutality by the primarily white racist Oakland police under orders to use all necessary force to maintain absolute control. White racist cops with minimal police training were purposefully and preferentially hired from southern states as a policy to not integrate and to maintain control over Oakland's impoverished black and minority communities.

Dickson reiterated the original seventh point of the Party Program, demanding, "An immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people, other people of color, and all oppressed people."

Over 60 were killed by combination of random violence and shootings as well as by the more than 10,000 police and military forces -- 4,500 city, county and state police brought in to quell the rebellion.

Current estimates of damage undoubtedly understate the total cost. Now an additional and predictable action on the part of the government adds another dimension of cost — that of another part of federal constitutional guarantees being ripped away by the joint ruling political clique of both parties within the state legislature.

The rapid vote of both legislative houses

From city after city across the country come reports of new leaders emerging from the affected communities themselves

and signing of the bill by Governor Wilson (it was flown to him to sign in Los Angeles) resulted in state authorization to deny federal constitutionally "guaranteed" rights to habeas corpus, to a quick and speedy trial, and to presumption of innocence until found guilty, by extending from two to seven days the time period within which a defendant charged with a felony must be taken before a magistrate for arraignment.

The government argument given for the denial of fundamental constitutional rights was that the 11,000 individuals arrested since the disturbances began on Wednesday April 28 have overwhelmed the ability of courts to handle the cases. Under the law, roughly 5,000 of the 8,000 charged with felonies who had not been processed would have to have been released by Friday, May 1 at midnight. (Editor's Note: By comparison, only 1700 felony arrests were made during the 1966 Watts rebellion.) The destructive rampage of angered citizens clearly indicates that the general public does not see the problem as simply one of justice gone awry. Rather it is the accumulation of years and years of economic devastation, brutal experiences and helplessness at the hands, guns, and power of the armed police and military

forces organized and paid by those in power to maintain a large underemployed and unemployed mass of workers available to keep wages low overall and to break strikes as needed.

Dickson said most major cities in the 1960s had BPP organizations, including Los Angeles itself, New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Birmingham, Madison, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, Seattle and Memphis.

The Party was destroyed by the FBI Cointelpro operation, provocateurs, bribed informants, and outright police murder all of which served to undermine and divert pure revolutionary goals.

CONDITIONS MUCH WORSE

Now, these cities have even larger minority populations, barely surviving in drug and crime ridden conditions which also serve to hold the poor in place and lacking in advanced practical or political organization.

Additionally, many other cities in which the population of blacks and other minorities has grown and in which skilled workers and professionals are increasingly impoverished find themselves sharing the same worsening economic, living, and working conditions. They are all overripe for not only the protest but the looting, rampaging and rioting that occurred in the 60s among those without jobs, property or hope.

While in Los Angeles the city, state and federal response was to delay entry until it was way out of control and then bring in heavy police and military repressive measures including mass arrests of thousands who did not loot, burn or smash but instead sought to express their anger by taking to the streets in peaceful protest — the only avenue of expression left to most, the policy varied from location to location, with some cities, such as New York City.

There, officials utilized a "go easy" approach that included expressions of outrage at the jury's decision by Mayor David Dinkins, and calls upon the population to maintain civil order in spite of the depth of the outrage at the racist and economically inspired decision.

Now the mayors of some 50 major cities are banking their hopes for a change in the abandonment of cities by the federal government on a march on Washington, D.C. called for Saturday May 16. "It is obvious that this is a losing strategy that puts continued decision making even on the parliamentary level directly back into the hands that are most recently responsible for the problem," said Dickson. "People took to the streets exactly because there is no hope for them in the halls of the government whether legislative, administrative or judicial. Neither is there hope at the city, state or federal level. The people must gain and exercise control over their own lives and communities for real material change to occur, and that is where we come in," he said.

"Things will never be the same again in this country or the world as the United States now finds itself a country divided. The Rodney king situation is just the tip of the iceberg. What is happening around the country is not just a riot but an insurrection as well. There were not only Blacks protesting and taking to the streets but races are in rebellion against the failing system. Blacks are the catalyst because they receive the brunt of the racial and economic oppression. Among the minority and low-income population, 91% strongly denounce the jury's decision, with 73% of "middle America" sharing that view. The lines are rarely drawn so clearly between the haves and the have-nots — those who feel they have a voice in things, and those who know they do not," said Richard Aoki, activist, educator and Acting Assisting Dean of Student Services at the College Alameda, Alameda, California.

From city after city across the country come reports of new leaders emerging from the affected communities themselves, in the absence of officials of established institutions coming out to join the mass protests. They include, for instance, individual young men and women from high schools taking the podium at a gathering of protest to speak their opposition and anger, then finding themselves leading a march of thousands from their school to the city hall or state capital. All were demanding justice and calling for federal action, including indictments of the police officers and the court system itself under the U.S. Constitution's 14th Amendment provisions against denial of civil rights under color of law.

Conitnued on next page

Cause of Rebellion

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In Los Angeles and elsewhere, citizens report rapid formation of armed self-protection groups, particularly among newly arrived immigrants to the ghettos and low-income communities, to protect business interests and property. Many point out that the growing cooperation between minority groups of similar economic status in the face of external efforts to create division present a growing threat to the need of anti-labor forces, headed by government, to keep the poor from organizing in their common self-interest against a common enemy.

Similarly, armed actions against police occurred, apparently spontaneously as police helicopters and personnel were fired upon from the riot-torn areas.

The murder of a hispanic youth by gunshot to the back of the head by a group of national guardsmen claiming he "drove his sports car at them at high speed and they were attempting to halt him by firing four-

Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party calls for grassroots organizing

teen rounds, highlights the depth to which the racism extends.

How the Black Panther Party Began

Dickson pointed out that the Black Panther Party had its roots in the police brutality that was a fact of life in Oakland and Alameda County, when Huey Newton and Bobby Seale followed the example of the Deacons for Justice of Lowndes County, Miss., a 1960's civil rights organization of black pastors and ministers. BPP teams began to follow Oakland police cruisers in areas noted for police brutality against black citizens, for the purpose of observing and witnessing racist and brutal police behavior and informing those who were victims or potential victims of their rights.

"Conservative blacks, presented on television as 'leaders' during the disturbances, called for calm and an end to the destruction," said Dickson. "They offered no programs or proposals to eliminate the root problems of economic impoverishment and racialism that are used to control and rule our communities as virtual colonies and plantations. These same leaders met with the President, Congressional leaders and mayors to plan how to calm the situation. But there has been little but talk — as has been true since organizations like NAACP, Congress of Racial Equality and the Congressional Black Caucus began."

"Many believe," continued Dickson, "that there was collusion between attorneys and political forces to obtain a change of venue from mostly black Los Angeles to mostly white Ventura County. Collusion was also involved in the decision to withhold police action to contain the disturbances until the situation had gotten out of hand and massive military-type force had to be applied. Thus a clear warning message came through lame-duck police chief Darryl Gates, who had been recently fired by the Los Angeles city council, from right-wing forces of reaction and racism, including government leaders, to 'uppity niggers' and all who desire change in economic, political and social conditions."

Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party calls for grassroots organizing in place of rioting, putting the organization on the streets where the people live and the problems exist, and demanding that the likely federal indictments are against the government and its racist and exploitive policies that created the nightmare, instead of simply offering the four policemen as sacrificial goats to appease an angry public. "The people will not be so easily appeased this time," said Dickson, "We know the root of the problem lies in the capitalist system and that the government policies of institutionalized racism is a way to keep people confuse as to the real problem. The bottom line is that the ruling class owns 90% of the country's wealth and make up only 1% of the population. Reforms are not the answer to long overdue fundamental changes without human society itself cannot move forward.

The free hand this decision would — if allowed to stand — grant to law enforcement personnel follows by only seven years the dropping of an aerial bomb in the Cobbs Creek neighborhood of Philadelphia on a civilian neighborhood — denounced by the 1206 people left homeless as an outright declaration of civil war on the people. At the time Attorney General Edwin Meese III described this means of serving an eviction notice on the reportedly unpopular MOVE organization as "a good example for law enforcement. "The white-washing that occurred after numerous attacks on the Panther's by the police demonstrate the same fundamental problem," said Dickson. The murder of Fred Hampton is only perhaps the most widely known.

Public response to the King trial verdict shows that low-income Americans and those who stand to the Constitution and the rights it guarantees will no longer stand the oppression of a hand to mouth existence, enforced by police now authorized to condemn and sentence a man without benefit of trial to 57 blows, multiple kicks, and two taser shocks for speeding and suspicion of being drunk.

The Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee is an organization rebuilding from the positive party principles as promulgated by Brother Huey P. Newton, by those of us who have learned from the errors and mistakes of the past. As Huey himself paraphrased the doctrine of Karl Marx, "one studies history not to understand it, but to change it."

Those interested in learning more about the Commemoration Committee for the BPP should contact Commemorator publisher at (510) 841-9063 or (510) 652-8828.

Calendar of Events

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"These societies must come to grips with the past, acknowledge responsibility for the present and do something about the future. It does no good to gloss over the history of excesses of Western civilization, especially when the excesses are the cause of deplorable conditions today." Suzan Shown Harjo

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TUBERCULOSIS:

The White Ghost

Tuberculosis, the "white ghost of the Apocalypse," which the World Health Organization considered defeated by new medical breakthroughs after its worldwide rampage in the 1930's, is returning, once again, as a grizzly and prominent "poverty death" certification, according to statistics recently reported by the U.S. Disease Control Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

The "white plague" is alive, well and spreading in the Oakland area

Unfortunately, the "white plague" is alive, well and spreading in the Oakland area. Nationally, tuberculosis increased 15% between 1985 and 1990. In California the increase was 39%, with Oakland's cases rising to 4th among cities over 250,000 from 14th in 1988.

That there is an epidemic in the Alameda County is not surprising. The downward economic spiral, the lack of local resources and a failure of will on the part of the authorities in the early stages of the outbreak a couple of years ago — coupled with extreme overcrowding in prisons resulting from the high incarceration rate — have all served to make the resurgence of the scourge inevitable.

That tuberculosis can be controlled and virtually eliminated was proved in the previous era, in spite of less sophisticated medication. In the past, public health officials were dedicated to its eradication and were supported by government, a situation which simply does not exist at present.

While tuberculosis can be overcome with a regimen of antibiotics supported by and adequate diet and healthy lifestyle, such a course is not readily available to those most likely to be exposed to it. Currently, the fee for the T.B. skin test is $20 at the county clinics. Low income people can get the test if they can prove that they cannot pay for it.

TB's chief symptom is poverty. In 1973, Researchers with the Coalition of Concerned Medical Professionals (CCMP) warned that TB would jump economic barriers and become the forerunner of a group

While the generally deteriorating condition of the "underclass" is the common denominator in the spread of tuberculosis, the prison system is the main incubator of the plague.

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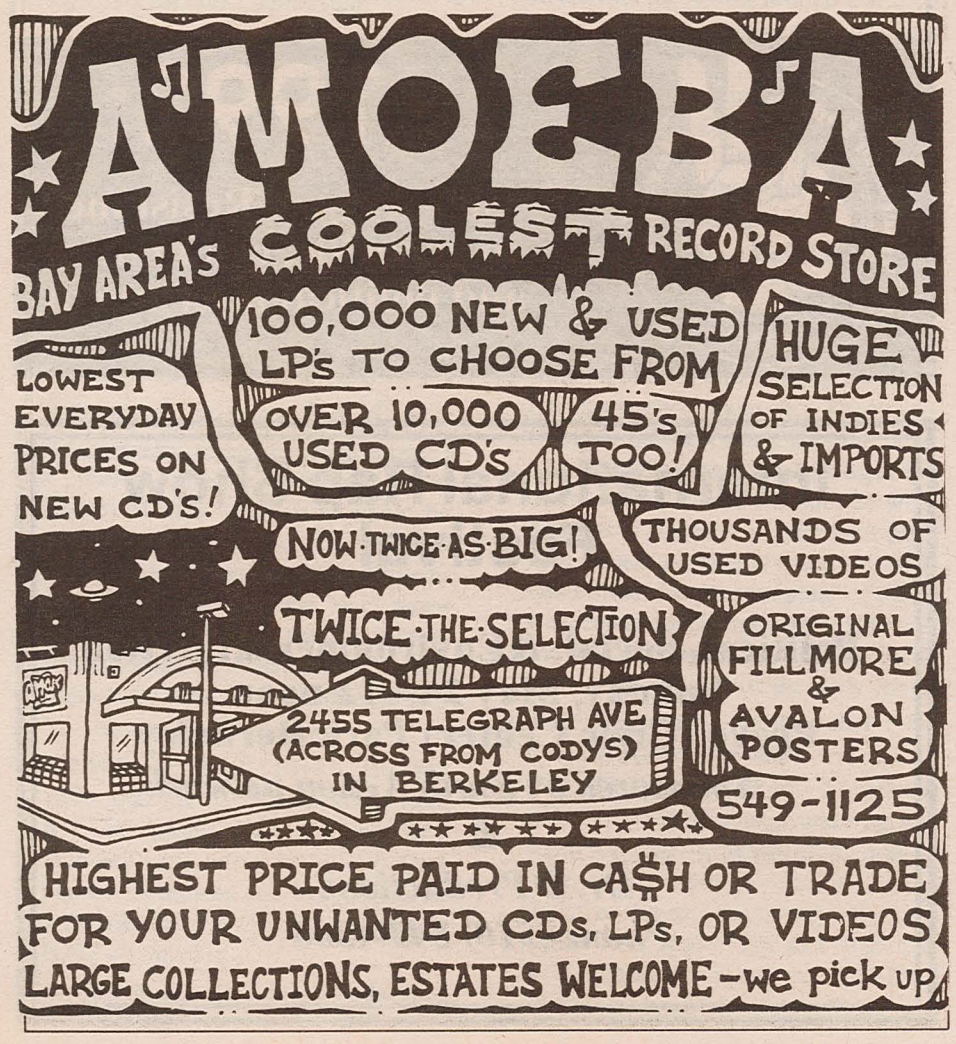
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Drug War:

A Cover For Class War

The drug war is one of the numerous wars of our era designed to polarize our psyche towards nationalism — racialism and class antagonism — while distracting our attention from a failing domestic economy. The very language of anti-drug hysteria demonstrates how shallow an attempt is being made to really address the problem on any fundamental level.

Though a few politicians give lip service to preventative solutions, it is apparent that the main emphasis of the drug war is aimed at attacking the symptoms of the problem rather than the root causes.

As people's lives are torn apart and thrown away, the best answer the government can come up with is a war against the very people, being victimized by the situation while the real Sleaze-balls (the bigwigs), whose life-styles are that of the rich and famous, rake in the billions. These people are seldom prosecuted and when they are it is usually done to give the illusion that the government is doing something about the "drug problem." The only reason Bush went after Noriega was because the mainstream media supported him and pushed the hype. The invasion of Panama in December of 1989 is a case in point whereby literally thousands of innocent people were killed. This gave the impression that Bush was getting tough against the drug traffickers, rallying Americans around the flag in support of an imperialistic war.

Though a few politicians give lip service to preventative solutions, it is apparent that the main emphasis of the drug war is aimed at attacking the symptoms of the problem rather than the root causes: Poverty, a lack of purpose and self-worth. This is because such a discussion could undermine a whole system of values and institutions which this economy profits from. So instead of healing addiction, the government criminalizes it. And rather than arrest the prime distributers and producers, the police, an armed-governmental institution, are busy brutalizing and arresting poor people who've turned to drugs because they have no options in life except crime and poverty, while middle and upper income people use over 80% of illegal drugs.

After twelve years of this approach under the Reagan and Bush administrations, the drug industry and the violence associated with it is at an all time high. The more resources allocated to the police to wage their "war", the worse it gets. Given this reality, one is forced to question the logic behind pursuing this strategy. And upon closer examination, it is safe to say that the government has never had any real intention to stem the proliferation of drugs whatsoever.

In fact, it has become common knowledge to many, that the government directly particpates in and profits from their sale and distribution. In a book entitled "Pipe Dream Blues, Racism and the War on Drugs", Clarence Lusane outlines the role of various politicians, corporate bankers and financers who control the international drug trade. Though most of these people don't get caught, we can look at the few who have been indicted to get an understanding of who they are and how they operate. Some examples of such people include Rep.Robert Hanrakan(R-Il), Richard Silberman, former fundraiser for Jerry Brown, former attorney general for the state of Kansas, several DEA agents and a consortium of Pennsylvania airline pilots called the Air America Organization.

To get a clear picture of the scale and profit margin involved with the cocaine trade, it is necessary to examine the process by which the money is laundered at major financial institutions. Lusane explains "One indication of how profitable the illegal drug industry has been for certain areas of the United states is the growth in cash surplus at local banks... In 1970, banks in Florida, a key drug entry point, had a cash surplus of $576 million. By 1976, this figure had grown to 1.5 billion. By 1982, the cash surplus of Jacksonville and Miami alone amounted to 5.2 billion..."

With curfews, checkpoints and added police presence in our communities, it is gradually becoming illegal for groups of people to gather.

Though the DEA has made attempts to prosecute a handful of people involved with drug trafficking, it seems likely that this is only for the benefit of the American media, to give the appearance that something is being done. In reality most of the high ranking white collar drug traffickers and money launderers get away with it, as Lusane further elaborates.

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Editorial

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for the rest of the world) there is really no conceivable military conflicts that the United States should be involved with. Yet we can expect father patriarch to find plenty of new reasons to keep the war machine going. George Orwell first constructed this model in the book 1984 "The primary aim of modern warfare (in accordance with the principles of doublethink, this aim is simultaneously recognized and not recognized by the directing brains of the inner party) is to use up the products of the machine without raising the general standard of living... Even when weapons of war are not actually destroyed, their manufacture is still a convenient way of expending labor power without producing anything that can be consumed."

If we hope to change these conditions and create provisions to ensure our survival in coming generations, we will need to work from a position of strength.

Maximum efficiency with the capitalist equation will be when everyone will be working for a few people, either in prison labor camps, building weapons or working for the government, jailing other people and over-seeing the process . In effect the government is attempting to go back to slavery.

This is the Big Picture, and it is obvious to many that it is high time for a new framework. The only remaining question is how to do it. Surely a variety of actions will be necessary. The system of monopoly capital is continuing to disenfranchise huge segments of the population including the middle classes. People are angry, people are organizing. Yet we are missing a common thread or unifying principle. What is needed is a movement unifying all oppressed and progressive communities with a set of common goals and strategies to achieve them. The longer we stay factionalized without a common strategy, the more we play into their hands. We can see from history how the system promulgates nationalism and competion in the lower levels of the class structure, while the elite ruling class works as an organized team to keep the masses confused and oppressed, struggling against each other instead of against them. As long we remain divided politically along issues of class, race, gender, culture and bipartisan politics, we will thus be ineffective, isolated, and targeted, if not just ignored.

What is needed is grass roots organization around the goals of community empowerment and economic liberation in poor and working communities. Theoretical abstractions are only useful when grounded in some practical, material program. This is the method of dialectical materialism and it is lesson taught from the legacy of the BPP. We are now in an even more urgent situation than when the Party began 26 years ago. According to a recent sociological study conducted in an Oakland, California, with AIDS, Tuberculosis, infant mortality, mal-nutrition and gang related violence are on the rise, on paper the numbers say we are facing extinction in about thirty years.

If we hope to change these conditions and create provisions to ensure our survival in coming generations, we will need to work from a position of strength. We need a movement, grounded in the "big picture" with grass roots programs around basic needs such as food, health, education and multicultural-unity. It must be done without government assistence , for any attempt to work within the system is sure to co-opt our goals and guarantee the government control over our lives and destiny. Those who understand the need for mutual co-operation will simply have to teach the rest by example. If we look at every level of organic life, we see that evolution to this form of social organization is in accordance with the only laws which are absolute and unalterable by any man or machine... the only laws that capitalism has not fit into it's equation, the laws of nature.

Peace and Power to the people.

Intercommunal News

Coke Ovens

Steel employers used other excuses when it came to trapping African American workers in coke oven. Back in the high employment period of steelmaking, the early 1950s, large numbers of African Americans were hired into the steelmill, but over 95 per cent were hired into the coke ovens. The employers' excuse then was that they were doing the Black workers a "favor" since they are "used to hot working conditions" and it would be "good"for them (outrageous, but true).

Because of the influence of racism this kind of attitude was not successfully challenged then. It took twenty years, following the passage of the labor-backed 1970 Occupational Safety and Health Act, coupled with the efforts were focused on these coke oven workers. Not surprisingly, it was found that the fumes coming from the superheating of coal, to produce coke (which is combined with iron ore to make steel), produced benzo-pyrene, a virulent cancer-causing chemical.

Since department seniority rules governed steel plants, these African American coke oven workers could not leave those departments without losing all accumulated seniority. The toll of employer racism constitutes an example that no public health professional should forget, public administrator not understand, or employer be allowed to disregard.

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THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY 10-POINT PROGRAM

WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT FREEDOM. WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES.

We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions that exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE. We believe *that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.*

3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. *We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency that will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.*

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS. *We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people in our communities with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.*

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY. *We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.*

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE. *We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities that will not only treat our illness, most of which have come about because of our oppression, but will also develop preventive medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.*

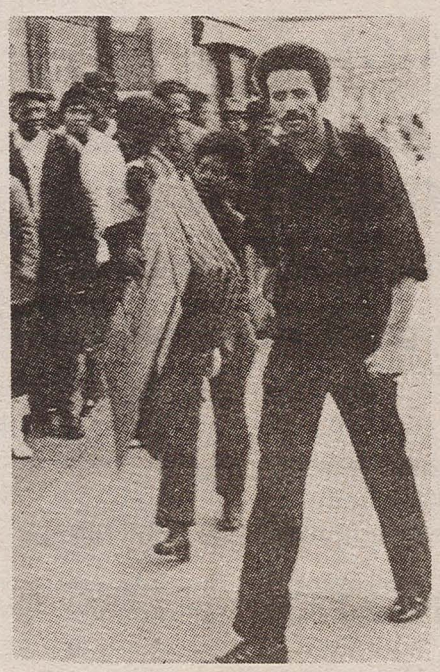
7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES. *We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color, and poor people inside the United States. We believe it's our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.*

8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGGRESSION. *We believe that the various conflicts that exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires of the U. S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U. S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.*

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U. S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY. *We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U. S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U. S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions that are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons are brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.*

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. *When, during human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bounds that have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.*

Fallen Comrade, Sam Napier



FOR SAM, A BROTHER/FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE

i remember now that sam used
to call me sweet sister

and his voice had a ring to it
like music/sort of a

soft-fast-hardworking voice
(always a smile to it tho)

that's how his soul was - soft
yet strong

fast, yet not bypassing the

needs of the people/ the
FREE-dom of the people/

hardworking -
yes he was

the sweat engraved in the
issues of our

paper - in good times/in hard,
bitter, bad times . . .

he is not/nor will ever be
forgotten - he was

too symbolic of all we stand for
dedication

love for the
people self less ness

seems as tho he was taken
away so unnecessarily

seems as tho we've got a lot
to learn about this struggle of
ours

seems as tho this country,
amerikkka, wants to wipe out

all the samuel napiers

jonathan jacksons

bobby seales of the whole
world

seems as tho we have a <u>whole
lot</u> of work to do

love to
give,

freedom to give, good
brother,

. . .i cannot be there/bobby
cannot so - on that, i place

a kiss upon your forehead and
a dandelion in your hand

(a dandelion because they
grow wild/free/rebellious over
the earth)

(like the people - poor
people/oppressed people.)

. . . this may be said many
times but it is sincere -

you will not be forgotten, we
love you, sweet brother

we love you/

ericka

Myths and Facts

continued from page

MYTH: For the sake of schoolchildren, welfare expenditures should be cut.

FACT: Governor Wilson is cynically pitting children against children. 69% of AFDC recipients are children. That is 1.5 million children who will be pushed closer to hunger and homelessness if grants are cut. One-fifth of all U.S. children live in poverty. One-half of all African-American children live in poverty. What will a generation of homeless and hungry schoolchildren mean for California's future?

MYTH: Welfare fraud is widespread.

FACT: Only 3-4% of payments are made in error, half of those by administrative error. The remaining 1-2% of overpayments are due largely to honest mistakes by clients rather than fraud, according to the Western Center on Law and Poverty. (In 3-4% of cases, clients receive less than they should.) In some cases, a mother babysits or cleans houses "under the table" to supplement her grant. In comparison, tax fraud and error result in the loss of 20% of taxes owed, a figure 10 times AFDC spending for the entire nation.

MYTH: Welfare is a problem of the urban black community.

FACT: Only 24.4% of AFDC recipients are black. 28.8% are Latino. Most of the rest are white. Significant numbers of rural poor families receive AFDC. Many families are one divorce, one layoff, one disabling injury, away from poverty, welfare, or homelessness. Wilson's proposals would also end cost-of-living increases for the aged, blind and disabled and would cut Medi-Cal benefits.

MYTH: The 1980's were a time of economic prosperity.

FACT: The working poor are the fastest growing group in poverty. A significant proportion of homeless men and woman have jobs. Many of the jobs created in the 1980's were low wage with no benefits or chance for advancement and little job security. A full-time job at minimum wage won't keep a family above the poverty level. The real "incentive" needed to help families get off welfare is more jobs with decent pay and benefits, more child care, and less sex and race discrimination on the job. Poverty among women has been increasing, partly because,on average, women earn only 66 cents for every dollar earned by men.

MYTH: Working, middle class people can't afford to pay for welfare.

FACT: The real welfare recipients of the 1980's were the wealthy. While the poorest fifth of the population saw its after-tax income (adjusted for inflation) fall 12% from 1977 to 1992, the richest 1% of the population became 136% richer! Supply-side tax cuts did not create more jobs but instead led to speculation, wasteful takeovers, and fraud. Estimates of the Savings and Loan bailout are $700 billion! Meanwhile, the infrastructure (schools, transportation, factories) is decaying and the middle class is disappearing, mostly becoming the working poor. AFDC recipients did not create these problems, and blaming the victims won't solve them.

MYTH: There's not enough money to pay for both welfare and education.

FACT: California can balance the budget without doing so on the backs of the poor and working people. The state must close loopholes and raise taxes on the rich and on big corporations. The poorest 20% of Californians pay 14.1% of their income in various state taxes, while the richest 1% pays only 10.6% of their income. According to the California Tax Reform Association, cutting business meal deductions to $70,000 would save $60 million, taxing the sale of inherited property, $200 million, and eliminating the deduction of interest on yachts, $10 million. These proposals would not hurt the small business owner or middle class home buyer. At the federal level as well, we need to restore tax rates cut in the 1980s. In 1980 the top marginal tax rate was 70%; it is now 33%. We also need to consider taxing professional and financial services. Billions of dollars could be raised through taxing stock brokerage firms and investment banking activities.

MYTH: We can't afford welfare spending during hard economic times.

FACT: Decreasing welfare and other assistance payments would make the economy worse. Low-income people spend all their money very quickly, which increases the demand for goods and services. Employers increase production and hire more workers. This is what creates jobs. The "trickle-down" theory that giving money to the rich would create jobs was just an excuse to help the rich get richer.

MYTH: AFDC parents are drug abusers.

FACT: Drug and alcohol abuse affect the rich, poor and every group in between, and only a minority of AFDC parents have substance abuse problems. Poor people who are addicted to drugs or alcohol face long waiting lists for the few available treatment slots.

MYTH: AFDC mothers irresponsibly have children they can't support.

FACT: Many woman who at one time had the means to support their children end up on AFDC because of unemployment, job discrimination, divorce, domestic violence, or fathers' failure to pay child support. Many young women do not have adequate access to family planning information. The United States Supreme Court has said that the decision whether to have a child is among the most personal of decisions and is protected by the right to privacy. Once children are born, our society should ensure a decent standard of living for them; otherwise society as a whole will face the consequences.

CONCLUSION: It's time to restore social programs and make the rich pay their fair share of taxes. Social programs protect the future for all Californians. Besides being fair, it makes good economic sense.

SOURCES: The Western Center on Law and Poverty; Campaign for a Fair Share; California Tax Reform Association; Women's Economic Agenda Project.

Tuberculosis

continued from page 10

of illnesses that would reinvade U.S. society from the bottom. "No one is going to suspect TB in a 43-year-old, $75,000-a-year country squire — or his wife, or his kids. One of the first rules of medical diagnosis is 'when you hear the pounding of hooves, look for horses, not zebras.' Well, the zebras are back."

The CCMP's report, soon to be published in book form, includes typhoid fever, bubonic plague and polio. Dr. Shapiro also points out that mutant strains of diphtheria were becoming a cause for national concern.

The CCMP's book, says, "AIDS was lucky. At least one faction of people, maybe two, were pregrouped so the public could see it happening." Other diseases, the report adds, won't be so visible because they come from by being poor. "That's almost a crime in itself, especially in the medical profession," CCMP doesn't think there will be anyone to stand up and cheer a group fighting these new epidemics.

While the generally deteriorating condition of the "underclass" is the common denominator in the spread of tuberculosis, the prison system is the main incubator of the plague. The prison system is housing over twice the capacity it was designed for. These prisons were not luxurious when built and there is no moral or ethical reason to fill them beyond their design limits. The situation is intolerable and should not be countenanced by people claiming allegiance to the basic social compact. The elimination of prison overcrowding should be a litmus test for any politician appealing to the low income community.

For those in the low income community at risk from various diseases inherent in the crowded conditions in American prisons, there is little satisfaction in knowing that the epidemic will eventually spread to the currently unconcerned middle and upper classes. By the time that happens, they may be dead already!

Conscientious Objector Tahan Jones

"Could I actually go out there and kill somebody? They were asking me to kill Arab people. For what? For every American killed, they killed more than a thousand Arabs. And people are celeb rating for that?"— Oakland marine Reservist Tahan Jones. An outspoken opponent of the Persian Gulf war, Jones has protested the immorality of war and military spending that diverts money from human needs programs.

What you can do to help:

Send a donation to help with legal and organizing expenses.

Write to your Congressional representative urging them to investigate the Marine's handling of conscientious objector cases. Call Marine General C,.L. Vermilyea, (504) 948-1210. Tell him to immediately drop the charges against Tahan.

For mor information, call the Tahan Jones/Erik Larsen Defense Committee, (510) 655-1201. Mail to: 1678 Shattuck Ave., Box 225, Berkeley, CA 94709 or call: (510) 655-1201

CCMP needs Organizers

CCMP is the only organization in the country where physicians and nurses can practice their professions ethically on behalf of unrecognized workers. Volunteers with medical skills are needed but a concern for those who cannot afford to stay healthy is the only requirement.

Write to CCMP

2205 Fourteenth Ave. Oakland CA 94606

Call: (510) 436-8020

Local Protests to King Verdict

Those who lived through the 60's know the familiar patterns that poor people are fighting poor people of different races or even the same race and burning down mostly poor neighborhoods. Though the most violent demonstrations took place outside the Bay Area, the response in the Bay Area was marked by political understanding in addition to frustration and rage.

In Oakland Frick Jr. High, Fremont High School and Skyline High School students organized a protest on Friday May 1, originally scheduled to meet at Eastmont Mall, but changed to meeting at E. 14th Street and Fruitvale Ave. after mall management decided to close and 20 police officers occupied the area. (Many mall merchants said they would have preferred to stay open and speak to protesters when they arrived. A few windows were broken later, by individuals unrelated to the protest.)

"There must be efforts at dialogue from within community itself to channel justified anger into a disciplined organized commitment to permanent change"

Another protest rally was organized at the Oakland Police Administration Building Thursday 30 April by Laney College Student Union, motivated by instructor and city council candidate Dezie Woods-Jones, to indict the lack of justice for black and poor people and "serve notice to the police institution."

Students from several colleges occupied the upper deck of the Bay Bridge Thursday 30 April until removed by California Highway Patrol, accounting for over 350 of the arrests reported in the Bay Area since the verdict was announced.

Richmond High School students occupied I-80 for a time Friday May 1, and a march from Mt. Tamalpais High School marched to the Golden Gate Bridge the same day.

Angela Davis addressed a rally of Laney students at 12th and Oak Thursday evening 30 April at 12th and Oak, attended by over 250 people. The following day 500 students at Cal State Hayward held a noon rally and marched down Mission Blvd.

Response in Oakland has generally been peaceful, a fact most community leaders attribute the long tradition of organized, response to oppression established by the Black Panther Party during many previous periods of uprising. "In Oakland after Martin Luther King's murder in 1968, the Black Panther Party met face to face with youths from local high schools and gangs to calm the volatile situation," said former Party member and Executive Commemoration Committee for the BPP member, Steve McCutchen.

The free hand this decision would — if allowed to stand — grant to law enforcement personnel follows by only seven years the dropping of an aerial bomb in the Cobbs Creek neighborhood of Philadelphia on a civilian neighborhood — denounced by the 1206 people left homeless as an outright declaration of civil war on the people. At the time Attorney General Edwin Meese III described this means of serving an eviction notice on the reportedly unpopular MOVE organization as "a good example for law enforcement." Public response to the King trial verdict shows that low income Americans will no longer stand the oppression of a hand to mouth existence, enforced by police now authorized to condemn and sentence a man without benefit of trial to 57 blows and two taser shocks for speeding and suspicion of being drunk..

In the face of massive destruction being imposed on poor and minority communities and the devastation and death that will inevitably result from the fire power of federal troops assigned in 1990 to flatten several barrios in Panama that happen to lie between U.S. military bases and their intended arrest of Manuel Noriega, community leaders who do not depend on government funding or official approval have called for new forms of struggle to fight for what is just without being annihilated. "There must be efforts at dialogue from within community itself to channel justified anger into a disciplined organized commitment to permanent change," said CCBPP Chairman Melvin Dickson. "We owe this opportunity to the young folks, not so young folks, and older folks to join together to change history, move ahead in building organization which addresses the *cause*, not just to rage against the way it has gone up to now."

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COMMEMORATOR: (510) 841-9063

Whom the Gods Destroy

Continued frompage 2

That the need for the safety of Oakland's citizens in the wake of the recent wave of violence is a crucial issue goes without further elaboration, but the underlying reasons and means to correct such atrocities must be approached from more than any narrow and fascistic "community policing" agenda or tidbit before and after school program arrangements.

The social order itself and those who knowingly or unwittingly allow for any portion of its people to "terrorize" the citizenry and in effect remain isolated and outside of any meaningful participation in that community, must ultimately consider itself and its priorities to blame.

Too often young black men in particular found themselves in overcrowded living conditions with less than subsistence measures to keep pace with their peers. Too often have these same young people entered their designated schools hungry, emotionally distraught by prior events, without the necessary let alone status items of their peers in terms of clothing and equipment, and have been unable to cope with learning frustrations and social pressures. These and other conditions gave rise to and will continue to nurture the spiraling abnormality that afflicts the Oakland communities.

When any community walks in fear it only invites greater distrust and lack of confidence from those who have become socially alienated and labeled as "incorrigible" and threatening. The reluctance and lack of support from the many sectors of the Oakland community to take community-centered and problem oriented steps to develop long-term goals and solutions for those destined to be left behind and left outside of the mainstream of events is an atrocity and dereliction of duty in itself.

The immediate answers to this"crime explosion" in Oakland will not disappear through curfews, threats, punishments or mass meetings. Those who have a true understanding of the perspectives of Oakland's Black dispossessed must find the will to create arenas and avenues which will provide the means for gainful employment and life-long learning, decent housing, secure and stable family relationships, forums for social input and reasonable expectations for well-being of those who some would consider expendable and "dangerous"; wasted human talents and resources for which society will no longer allow a chance to exist and prosper.

Our young people are angry and resentful of the slipshod treatment which confronts them here in Oakland; they are indifferent to the promises of success in mainstream settings when in fact they are being discouraged by the time they reach the second grade. Even those talented enough to enjoy a measure of achievement must endure the anxieties and even fears of being overtaken or overlooked as competition for favored positions and status rules individual behaviors.

There can be no normalcy of social conditions when the incentives, both implicit and explicit, motivate young Black people in particular, to seek maddening alternatives in search of respect, relationships, material comforts, leisures and social justice. Without meaningful and realistic frameworks which consider the real needs and interests of an already hurting and for too long ignored people, nothing can be expected but the type of bloodshed and destruction which has ill affected this city.

Perhaps there are those who are entrenched in various institutions and agencies who do not want portions of the Black community to survive. Could it be that the holders of power at various levels are deliberately seeking cost effective ways of sweeping away the "unnecessary" members of the Black communities?

If the rush to grab at "band-aid" remedies persists, then the casualty list in Oakland and elsewhere will continue to mount. Posturing and threatening those already with nothing to lose will not improve the mass condition, it will only create more volatile conditions for our kin and kind. Press these young people or any in their position against the wall and they are effectively driven to turn against each other; they are in fact being driven to madness. How true it is then, that... "whom the Gods would destroy, they first make mad."

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Drug War

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"It's estimated that prosecuters catch only two percent of laundered money circulating in the U.S. Actions against high ranking launderers has been limited due to strong lobbying by banks to curtail government regulations and oversight. Many of these bankers have close financial and personal ties with Bush and Reagan administration officials. Consequently, prosecution of launderers has not been a high priority for either the Bush or Reagan administration. As a result, billions of drug tainted dollars are pulsing through the nations financial system."(p95)

"Just Say No" and "zero tolerance" are examples of language that attempts to define reality into simple dichotomies

As scandal after scandal unfolds, a web of hypocrisy and lies is falling before the public eye. A recent investigation of the Silverado Savings and Loan affair, done by the Houston Post has uncovered links between twenty-two of the banks, the CIA, drug traffickers and organized crime figures. Neil Bush, the presidents son, was on the board of directors.

Drugs are the perfect commodity for capitalism. The cost of production and labor is nominal and the demand is great. The market expands geometrically with every person and every community it touches. Furthermore, the more they attack the street dealer and user, the more the price goes up. They can perfectly control the ratio of drugs seized to those distributed, creating an inflationary cycle to maximize short-term profits.

It is only natural that most aggressive capitalists will attempt to corner the market. The Bush administration's business associates have ruthlessly taken over the trade and put a stranglehold on local markets in central and south America, forcing farmers living at subsistence level to "slash and burn" their natural habitats to grow coca for America. George Bush has even curbed imports of Coffee, Columbia's only other major cash crop.

Though profit is the main motive behind the governments drug policies, the drug war serves a whole host of other hidden agendas. For instance, it serves as the perfect excuse to set up the police state of their wildest dreams. It is a classic method of control used by the ruling class; create a problem and than come in with a solution that serves their interests. The recent wave of drug related crime in Oakland has become the pretense for Martial law. With curfews, checkpoints and added police presence in our communities, it is gradually becoming illegal for groups of people, particularly young black males, to gather in public. The rise in police brutality and arrests of those mis-labeled as the cause of drug violence clearly demonstrates a plan to force people to either submit to their status as oppressed, underprivelaged drones for the capitalist economy or go to jail, where eventually we will all be made to work for these same people who deal and probably do drugs themself.

The fact is that every one in America does drugs, whether it is illegal ones, liquor, nicotine, caffeine, headache pills, diet pills, prescription drugs, hormones, or television. Dangerous toxic chemicals pervade everything we eat, the air we breath and the rain that falls. Yet the government has the audacity to dictate what substances we should or should not do. And invariably, they push on us those substances which serve to numb our existence and make us forget who we are.

Everywhere you go in our communities we are bombarded with advertising depicting half-naked women telling us to buy alcohol and cigarettes, making the human body itself a commodity to be sold and consumed. The masses go home after hours of degrading, unfullfilling work and watch hours of television void of any substance or content, designed to appease our senses and fill the spiritual gap left in our lives by capitalism and consumerism.

Through slick capialist commericals, we are told to drink alcohol which deaden our senses and makes us forget our problems. Whereas relatively harmless and natural substances like marijuana, which has been used by native people in religious cermonials for centuries, are discouraged.

Furthermore, we are conditioned with the ethic of mass consumption from the day we come into the world, so that any of the numerous substances offered us, we are taught to use to excess. We are a nation of addicts. But instead of trying to heal our addictive nature and teach responsibility towards substances in our environment, we are offered the narrow-minded, simplistic rhetoric of the drug war. "Just Say No" and "zero tolerance" are examples of language that attempts to define reality into simple dichotemys of good and bad, rather than coming to grips with the immense complexity of these issues. Rarely, is the drug epidemic ever discussed as a crisis of American values. This is because the ruling class who sets up the framework of the discussion have no real commitment to save our people from scourge that drugs like cocaine have left on our community. Cocaine is the ideal weapon in their "War". Cocaine perfectly embodies the consciousness of easy pleasure and immediate gratification which pervades all of America's culture and media. It is a high that keeps the individual from thinking about anything at all, except getting more. It's incredibly addictive nature has been the perfect tool to destroy the sense of community that so many have fought so hard to bring about.

And in the final analysis, the ultimate goal of the "drug war" has become quite clear, as Clarence Lusane illustrates "One more ominous sign of the governments real aim is the federal bureau of prisons announcement that it plans to build 20,000 new prison cells over the next 15 years."

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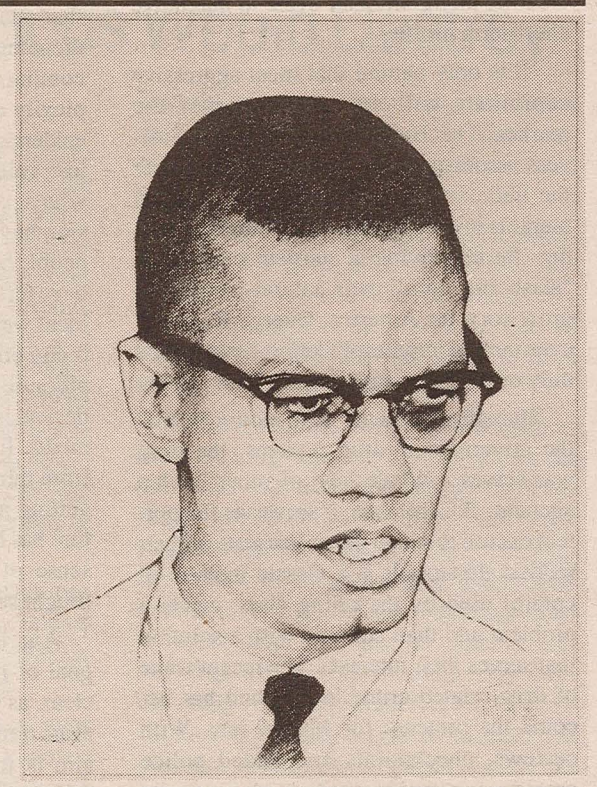

The ideas of Malcolm X revolutionized a generation of black Americans, turning a large segment of the population towards militancy in order to achive the just and equal treatment which was rightfully theirs. The legacy he left influenced the formation of the Black Panther Party and other militant organizations throughout the nation in a movement of urban blacks who began to embrace revolutionary nationalism.

Malcolm's preachings were influenced by his religous teachings as a minister of the Nation of Islam. Over the years, his ideas evolved from Black Nationalism to a more all-encompassing view, as he began to see Black American's struggle for self-determination and justice in an international context, related to the struggle of the Viet Cong. He began to speak out against capitalism as a blood-sucking system which was the underlying cause behind racial oppression. The solution, he began to feel, was socialism as an economic formation. He was assasinated on Feb.19, 1965.

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